

LYRA HISTORICA

POEMS OF BRITISH HISTORY

A.D. 61-1910

SELECTED BY
M. E. WINDSOR
AND
J. TURRAL

WITH PREFACE BY
J. C. SMITH



PART I: A.D. 61-1381

OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

1911

1579 5

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„ II (1388-1641).	Eightpence.
„ III (1644-1910).	One Shilling.

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PREFACE

HISTORY begins in myth and legend, saga and song : the teaching of history begins in the same way. The historic sense is the flower of a complete culture : feeling for the lapse of time, grasp of causal connexions, apprehension of corporate motives and impersonal forces—these gifts come late ; to some of us they never come at all. But the youngest scholar can relish a good story, whatever the century in which the scene is laid. He can appreciate the picturesque or panoramic aspect, the pageant of history ; and if the panorama be arranged in temporal order and kept in place by a few dates well driven in, he has a store of incident for his growing mind to work upon and a framework of chronology to hold his knowledge together.

But history has another function in the school. Even should our scholars never develop the historic sense, yet if the episodes in this pageant be chosen for their moral as well as for their picturesque value, they may inspire young hearts with a love for their country and a reverence for the great figures and ideals of its past that may have incalculable effects upon its future. This is the ethical aspect, the parable of history ; and it is here that literature can best do it service. On the seventeenth of February, 1818, some workmen digging about the ruins of Dunfermline Abbey discovered a coffin, in which lay the skeleton of a man of great stature. Fragments of cloth-of-gold were about the bones ; the breast-bone had been sawn asunder. The news went through Scotland that the tomb of Bruce had been found. From all parts people flocked to gaze upon the relics of that hero-king ; and as they filed past the coffin it is recorded that

many of them burst into tears. What was it that had kept Bruce's memory so green that after five hundred years it would still evoke such an outburst of feeling from a people so loth to show emotion? It was certainly not political history as presented in the textbooks. It was literature, oral and written. The Bruce over whom these people wept was the Bruce of literature and tradition. He stood to them for a national ideal, for love of country and love of freedom, for courage and patience, kindness and magnanimity. And these things belong to an order above historicity.

To present this pageant and to inspire this reverence for the great figures of the past—such are the objects of this collection. Historical anthologies may err in two ways. In their anxiety to illustrate every period, editors may fall back on poems of poor literary quality; or, if their propensities be literary, they may include good poems that illustrate little or nothing. I trust that our editors will be found to have avoided both errors indifferently well.

So far I have spoken of picturesque episodes and great personages, for these are the themes of this book. But there is another aspect of history that has been found to attract the young—I mean the story of the actual life of the 'dim multitudes', the Hodgkiss of Mr. Maurice Hewlett. One of the present editors, Mr. Turrel, has in hand a volume of 'Illustrations to British History', which will deal, I trust adequately, with that aspect. To that volume also have been relegated many contemporary poems and ballads, which, though not apt for the purpose of this book, yet illuminate British history at many points, and sometimes even helped to make it.

I am desired to acknowledge the indebtedness of the editors to Mr. Hugh Cass, whose knowledge and taste supplied several of the most striking selections.

J. C. SMITH.

May, 1911.

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Thanks for permission to include poems and extracts are due to the following:—

Mr. William Watson and Mr. John Lane for *The Father of the Forest*.

Mr. W. H. Ogilvie for *Ode on a Roman Helmet*, from 'The Land we love', published by Fraser, Asher & Co., Ltd., Glasgow and Dalbeattie.

Rev. F. M. Temple Palgrave for F. T. Palgrave's *Paulinus and Edwin*, and *Crey*.

Mr. Alfred Austin for *The Spotless King*.

Ellis for an extract from D. G. Rossetti's *The White Ship*.

PART I

THE FATHER OF THE FOREST

For prologue to our book we have chosen this majestic vision of one of the noblest of living poets, wherein 'as from a tower' we gaze down that long vista of English history which these pages seek to illuminate.

OLD emperor Yew, fantastic sire,
Girt with thy guard of dotard kings,—
What ages hast thou seen retire
Into the dusk of alien things?
What mighty news hath stormed thy shade, 5
Of armies perished, realms unmade?

Already wast thou great and wise,
And solemn with exceeding eld,
On that proud morn when England's eyes,
Wet with tempestuous joy, beheld 10
Round her rough coasts the thundering main
Strewn with the ruined dream of Spain.

Hardly thou count'st them long ago,
The warring faiths, the wavering land,
The sanguine sky's delirious glow, 15
And Cranmer's scorched, uplifted hand.
Wailed not the woods their task of shame,
Doomed to provide the insensate flame?

Mourned not the rumouring winds, when she, 20
The sweet queen of a tragic hour,
Crowned with her snow-white memory
The crimson legend of the Tower?
Or when a thousand witcheries lay
Felled with one stroke, at Fotheringay?

Ah, thou hast heard the iron tread 25
And clang of many an armoured age,
And well recall'st the famous dead,
Captains or counsellors brave or sage,
Kings that on kings their myriads hurled,
Ladies whose smile embroiled the world. 30

Rememberest thou the perfect knight,
The soldier, courtier, bard in one,
Sidney, that pensive Hesper-light
O'er Chivalry's departed sun?
Knew'st thou the virtue, sweetness, lore, 35
Whose nobly hapless name was More?

The roystering prince, that afterward
Belied his madcap youth, and proved
A greatly simple warrior lord
Such as our warrior fathers loved— 40
Lives he not still? for Shakespeare sings
The last of our adventurer kings.

His battles o'er, he takes his ease,
Glory put by, and sceptred toil.
Round him the carven centuries 45
Like forest branches arch and coil.
In that dim fane, he is not sure
Who lost or won at Azincour!

Roofed by the mother minster vast
That guards Augustine's rugged throne, 50
The darling of a knightly Past
Sleeps in his bed of sculptured stone,
And flings, o'er many a warlike tale,
The shadow of his dusky mail.

The monarch who, albeit his crown 55
Graced an august and sapient head,
Rode roughshod to a stained renown
O'er Wallace and Llewellyn dead,
And eased at last by Solway strand
His restless heart and ruthless hand; 60

Or that disastrous king on whom
 Fate, like a tempest, early fell,
 And the dark secret of whose doom
 The Keep of Pomfret kept full well;
 Or him whose lightly leaping words 65
 On Becket drew the dastard swords;
 Or Eleanor's undaunted son,
 That, starred with idle glory, came
 Bearing from leagured Ascalon
 The barren splendour of his fame, 70
 And, vanquished by an unknown bow,
 Lies vainly great at Fontevraud;
 Or him, the footprints of whose power
 Made mightier whom he overthrew;
 A man built like a mountain-tower, 75
 A fortress of heroic thew;
 The Conqueror, in our soil who set
 This stem of Kinghood flowering yet;—
 These, or the living fame of these,
 Perhaps thou minglest—who shall say?— 80
 With thrice remoter memories,
 And phantoms of the mistier day,
 Long ere the tanner's daughter's son
 From Harold's hands this realm had won.
 What years are thine, not mine to guess! 85
 The stars look youthful, thou being by;
 Youthful the sun's glad-heartedness;
 Witless of time the unageing sky!
 And these dim-groping roots around
 So deep a human Past are wound, 90
 That, musing in thy shade, for me
 The tidings scarce would strangely fall
 Of fair-haired despots of the sea
 Scaling our eastern island wall,
 From their long ships of norland pine, 95
 Their 'surf deer', driven o'er wilds of brine.

61. disastrous] ill-starred, unfortunate. 76. thew] strength.
 88. Witless] ignorant.

Nay, hid by thee from Summer's gaze
 That seeks in vain this couch of loam,
 I should behold, without amaze,
 Camped on yon down the hosts of Rome, 100
 Nor start though English woodlands heard
 The self-same mandatory word
 As by the Cataracts of the Nile
 Marshalled the legions long ago,
 Or where the lakes are one blue smile 105
 'Neath pageants of Helvetian snow,
 Or 'mid the Syrian sands that lie
 Sick of the day's great tearless eye,
 Or on barbaric plains afar,
 Where, under Asia's fevering ray, 110
 The long lines of imperial war
 O'er Tigris passed, and with dismay
 In fanged and iron deserts found
 Embattled Persia closing round,
 And 'mid their eagles watched on high 115
 The vultures gathering for a feast,
 Till, from the quivers of the sky,
 The gorgeous star-flight of the East
 Flamed, and the bow of darkness bent
 O'er Julian dying in his tent. 120
 Was it the wind befooling me
 With ancient echoes, as I lay?
 Was it the antic fantasy
 Whose elvish mockeries cheat the day?
 Surely a hollow murmur stole 125
 From wizard bough and ghostly bole:
 Goodly the loud ostents to thee,
 And poms of Time: to me more sweet
 The vigils of Eternity,
 And Silence patient at my feet; 130
 And dreams beyond the deadening range
 And dull monotonies of Change.

126. bole] trunk of a tree.

127. ostents] wonders.

Often an air comes idling by
With news of cities and of men.

I hear a multitudinous sigh, 135

And lapse into my soul again.
Shall her great noons and sunsets be
Blurred with thine infelicity?

Now from these veins the strength of old,
The warmth and lust of life depart; 140
Full of mortality, behold

The cavern that was once my heart!
Me, with blind arm, in season due,
Let the ærial woodman hew.

For not though mightiest mortals fall, 145
The starry chariot hangs delayed.

His axle is uncooled, nor shall
The thunder of His wheels be stayed.
A changeless pace His coursers keep,
And halt not at the wells of sleep. 150

The South shall bless, the East shall blight,
The red rose of the Dawn shall blow;
The million-lilied stream of Night
Wide in ethereal meadows flow;
And Autumn mourn; and everything 155
Dance to the wild pipe of the Spring.

'Who prates to me of arms and kings,
Here in these courts of old repose?
Thy babble is of transient things,
Broils, and the dust of foolish blows. 160
Thy sounding annals are at best
The witness of a world's unrest.

'With oceans heedless round her feet,
And the indifferent heavens above,
Earth shall the ancient tale repeat 165
Of wars and tears, and death and love;
And, wise from all the foolish Past,
Shall peradventure hail at last

'The advent of that morn, divine
 When nations may as forests grow,
 Wherein the oak hates not the pine,
 Nor beeches wish the cedars woe,
 But all, in their unlikeness, blend
 Confederate to one golden end—

176

'Beauty: the vision whereunto,
 In joy, with pantings from afar,
 Through sound and odour, form and hue,
 And mind and clay, and worm and star—
 Now touching goal, now backward hurled—
 Toils the indomitable world.'

175

180

W. WATSON.

12. *the ruined dream of Spain.* See Froude's 'Destruction of the Armada in Ireland 1588,' ch. 71 of the *History*.

16. *Cranmer's scorched, uplifted hand.* Cranmer recanted his Protestantism six times; but Mary had determined that he should die. At his martyrdom (1556) he thrust his right hand into the fire, as it had 'offended in writing, contrary to his heart'.

20. *The sweet queen.* Lady Jane Grey, proclaimed Queen by Northumberland, ruled for eleven days and was then sent to the Tower by Mary, where she was executed. 'A portrait of piety, purity, and free noble innocence uncoloured' (Froude).

24. *Fotheringay.* Where Mary Queen of Scots was executed in 1587.

33. *Hesper.* Sidney was the 'evening star' of the great day of chivalry. The story of his death at Zutphen in 1586 is well known.

36. *More.* Sir Thomas More (1478-1535), Henry VIII's Chancellor, executed for refusing to take the oath of supremacy. He was the most distinguished of the leaders of the New Learning in England, and the bosom friend of Erasmus.

37. *The roystering prince.* Prince Hal, afterwards Henry V. 'Madcap Harry's' exploits, as told in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, are probably mostly fictitious: at the age of sixteen he was holding a responsible position in the army at the battle of Shrewsbury (1403), and in 1410 presiding at the Council.

47. *that dim fane.* Westminster Abbey, which has a special side-chapel for Henry V.

49. *the mother minster.* Canterbury Cathedral. The Black Prince's 'dusky mail' still hangs over his tomb.

57. *roughshod to a stained renown*, &c. An allusion to Edward I's ruthless treatment of Scotland and Wales, and to his death at Burgh-on-Sands ('Solway strand') in a determined attempt to put down Bruce's rebellion. But his fame rests securely on the wise laws he made, and on the perfecting of the Parliamentary system and constitution during his reign.

64. *Pomfret*, or Pontefract Castle, in Yorkshire, where probably Richard II was murdered in 1399.

65. *him*. Henry II.

lightly leaping words. 'What a parcel of fools have I nourished in my house that none of them can be found to avenge me on one upstart clerk.'

67. *Eleanor's undaunted son*. Richard the Lion Heart, who failed to retake Ascalon, captured by Saladin in 1187, and who is buried in the abbey of Fontevraud.

72. *Fontevraud*. An abbey near Saumur.

83. *the tanner's daughter's son*. William the Conqueror was the son of Robert, Duke of Normandy, and Arletta, the daughter of a tanner of Falaise.

93. *fair-haired despots*. The Vikings or Northmen.

103. *by the Cataracts*. This may refer to the end of the Civil War between Pompey and Caesar. Egypt came under the influence of Rome about 90 B.C.

106. *Helvetian snow*. A reference to Caesar's campaigns in Gaul.

110-120. *Julian*. Julian 'the Apostate', Emperor of Rome, died A.D. 363 fighting the Persians.

BOADICEA (A.D. 61)

In A.D. 61 Boadicea, Queen of the Iceni (a tribe inhabiting what is now Norfolk and Suffolk), headed a rising of Britons against the Roman governor Suetonius Paulinus. She captured Colchester, St. Albans, and London, but she was eventually defeated, and to avoid captivity drank poison.

WHEN the British warrior queen,
Bleeding from the Roman rods,
Sought, with an indignant mien,
Counsel of her country's gods,

Sage beneath a spreading oak
Sat the Druid, hoary chief;
Ev'ry burning word he spoke,
Full of rage, and full of grief.

5

'Princess! if our aged eyes
Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,
'Tis because resentment ties
All the terrors of our tongues.

10

Rome shall perish—write that word
In the blood that she has spilt;
Perish, hopeless and abhorr'd,
Deep in ruin as in guilt.

15

Rome, for empire far renown'd,
Tramples on a thousand states;
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground—
Hark! the Gaul is at her gates!

20

Other Romans shall arise,
Heedless of a soldier's name;
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize—
Harmony the path to fame.

Then the progeny that springs
From the forests of our land,
Arm'd with thunder, clad with wings,
Shall a wider world command.

Regions Caesar never knew
Thy posterity shall sway,
Where his eagles never flew,
None invincible as they!'

Such the bard's prophetic words,
Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending, as he swept the chords
Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She, with all a monarch's pride,
Felt them in her bosom glow;
Rush'd to battle, fought, and died;
Dying, hurl'd them at the foe.

Ruffians, pitiless as proud,
Heav'n awards the vengeance due;
Empire is on us bestow'd,
Shame and ruin wait for you.

W. COWPER.

2. *Roman rods.* Boadicea had been publicly flogged by the Romans.

6. *Druid.* The Druids were the priests of the religion which the Britons practised. They were also the poets, prophets, and judges of the people.

20. *the Gaul.* Rather, the Goth. The Goths sacked Rome in A.D. 408, the Gauls in 390 B.C.

21-2. *Other Romans.* The sequence of ideas shows that Cowper is thinking of a period subsequent to the discovery of America, when Italy, once supreme in arms, was become famous only in the arts, and England, now mistress of the seas, was planting colonies in the New World.

31. *eagles*. The Roman standard was a pole surmounted by an eagle.

34. Cf. Gray's *Elegy*, v. 46.

44. *Shame and ruin.* The break-up of the Roman Empire.

ON A ROMAN HELMET

(300)

These verses were occasioned by the discovery of a Roman helmet and other remains on the site of the Roman camp near Melrose.

A HELMET of the legion, this,
That long and deep hath lain,
Come back to taste the living kiss
Of sun and wind again.
Ah! touch it with a reverent hand,
For in its burnished dome
Lies here within this distant land
The glory that was Rome!

5

The tides of sixteen hundred years
Have flowed, and ebbd, and flowed,
And yet—I see the tossing spears
Come up the Roman Road;
While, high above the trumpets pealed,
The eagles lift and fall,
And, all unseen, the War God's shield
Floats, guardian, over all!

10

15

Who marched beneath this gilded helm?
Who wore this casque a-shine?
A leader mighty in the realm?
A soldier of the line?
The proud patrician takes his rest
The spearman's bones beside,
And earth who knows their secret best
Gives this of all their pride!

20

With sunlight on this golden crest
 Maybe some Roman guard,
 Set free from duty, wandered west
 Through Memory's gates unbarred;
 Or climbing Eildon cleft in three,
 Grown sick at heart for home,
 Looked eastward to the grey North Sea
 That paved the road to Rome.

Or by the queen of Border streams
That flowed his camp beneath
Long dallied with the dearer dreams
Of love as old as death,
And doffed this helm to dry lips' need,
And dipped it in the tide,
And pledged in brimming wine of Tweed
Some maid on Tiber-side.

Years pass; and Time keeps tally,
And pride takes earth for tomb,
And down the Melrose valley
Corn grows and roses bloom;
The red suns set, the red suns rise,
The ploughs lift through the loam,
And in one earth-worn helmet lies
The majesty of Rome.

W. H. OGILVIE.

29. *Eildon*. The Eildon Hills are three conical-shaped hills south of Melrose. On one of the three there are traces of a Roman camp.

33. *queen of Border streams.* The Tweed.

PAULINUS AND EDWIN

(627)

When Ethelburga, daughter of the King of Kent, was married to Edwin of Northumbria, Paulinus, one of Augustine's monks, was sent to attend on her. He converted Edwin, and Christianity was recognized in the North. There are still evidences of Paulinus' work in many parts of Lancashire and Yorkshire, as e.g. the Cross at Whalley Church near Blackburn. He is said to have travelled all over Northumbria in six years, preaching and baptizing. [See Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*.]

THE black-hair'd gaunt Paulinus
By ruddy Edwin stood:—
'Bow down, O King of Deira,
'Before the holy Rood!
'Cast forth thy demon idols,
'And worship Christ our Lord!' 5
—But Edwin look'd and ponder'd,
And answer'd not a word.

Again the gaunt Paulinus
To ruddy Edwin spake: 10
'God offers life immortal
'For his dear Son's own sake!
'Wilt thou not hear his message
'Who bears the Keys and Sword?'
—But Edwin look'd and ponder'd, 15
And answer'd not a word.

• Rose then a sage old warrior;
 Was five-score winters old;
 Whose beard from chin to girdle
 Like one long snow-wreath roll'd:— 20
 'At Yule-time in our chamber
 'We sit in warmth and light,
 'While cavern-black around us
 'Lies the grim mouth of Night.

'Athwart the room a sparrow 25
 'Darts from the open door:
 'Within the happy hearth-light
 'One red flash,—and no more!
 'We see it born from darkness,
 'And into darkness go:— 30
 'So is our life, King Edwin!
 'Ah, that it should be so!

'But if this pale Paulinus
 'Have somewhat more to tell;
 'Some news of whence and whither, 35
 'And where the Soul may dwell:—
 'If on that outer darkness
 'The sun of Hope may shine;—
 'He makes life worth the living!
 'I take his God for mine!' 40

So spake the wise old warrior;
 And all about him cried,
 'Paulinus' God hath conquer'd!
 'And he shall be our guide:—
 'For he makes life worth living, 45
 'Who brings this message plain,—
 'When our brief days are over,
 'That we shall live again.'

F. T. PALGRAVE.

3. *Deira*. Northern England.

THE SPOTLESS KING

(901)

It has been said that there have been greater warriors, greater statesmen, and greater scholars than Alfred the Great, but that no man ever combined in one person so much excellence in war, legislation, and scholarship (Gardiner).

The poem that follows was written for the Millenary Celebration at Winchester in 1901.

SOME lights there be within the Heavenly Spheres
Yet unrevealed, the interspace so vast :
So through the distance of a thousand years
Alfred's full radiance shines on ^{us} at last.

Star of the spotless fame, from far-off skies 5
Teaching this truth, too long not understood,
That only they are worthy who are wise,
And none are truly great that are not good.

Of valour, virtue, letters, learning, law,
Pattern and prince, His name will now abide, 10
Long as of conscience Rulers live in awe,
And love of country is their only pride.

But with His name four other names attune,
Which from oblivion guardian Song may save;
Lone Athelney, victorious Ethandune, 15
Wantage his cradle, Winchester his grave.

A. AUSTIN.

15. *Athelney*. An island amid the marshes of Mid-Somerset, where Alfred took refuge in 878 from Guthrum, King of the Danes. *Ethandune*. In Wiltshire, where Alfred, after leaving Athelney, defeated Guthrum.

HAROLD AND TOSTIG

(1066)

While King Harold was watching for the landing of the Duke of Normandy, he learned that his own brother Tostig, aided by the Norse rover Harold Hardrada, had invaded Northumbria, from the earldom of which King Harold had deposed him. Harold, feeling that both duty and honour compelled him to drive the invaders out of England, marched his army north and defeated the enemy at Stamford Bridge on the Derwent, where both Hardrada and Tostig were slain.

[See Lytton's *Harold*, Book XI, Ch. 11.]

FORTH from England's ranks a score of horsemen
Ride, their chargers mailed, and mailed their riders.

Near the Northmen's steel array up-reining,
'Where is Tostig?' shouts their kingly leader.

'I am he,' quick answer makes the fierce Earl. 5
'To thee sends thy brother Harold greeting.

Thine shall be again Northumbria's earldom;
Thou, his man, shalt rule with him his kingdom.'

'Friendship had ye proffered then, full surely,
Better had it been this day for England. 10

But if I, forgiving, take thy proffer,
What giv'st thou to Harold, King of Norway?'

Hollow from the blue helm leaps the answer,
'Gift too will we give unto Hardrada.

Seven feet of English earth shall his be; 15
More, if more be needed by his stature.'

Grimly laugh around the mailed horsemen,
Fiercely joying in the kingly answer.

But in wrath dark grows the frown of Tostig,
From his lips leap hoarse the words of thunder, 20

'Then let Harold bouné him for the battle;
Never Northman this shall say of Tostig,

That, with Sigurd's son, I, warring westward,
Basely left him, left him for his foemen.'

DEATH OF HAROLD HARDRADA

(1066)

LIKE the tall mast snapped before the storm-wind
Falls he, like the pine cleft by the woodman.

Never more the strong shall fall before him,
While behind him pours the flood of battle.

Long his Queen shall watching look to westward, 5
Look across the long waves for his coming.

Round him fight and fall the heaped-up corpse-ring,
Scorning Harold's proffered peace and mercy.

Falls fierce Tostig, grimly as the bear falls,
Fell, at bay, amid the shouting huntsmen. 10

Falls at last the beacon of the war-field;
The Land-waster sinks, the Raven-Standard.

'Plight your troth, no more your ocean riders,
Viking-filled, shall come with fire and slaughter.

21. bouné] prepare.

So bear hence your kingly dead, O Olaf, 15
In your long ships, home, O heroes, bear him.

And with holy rites, in far-off Norway,
Tomb him, peaceful after all his battles.'

Forth to seawards sweep the Northmen's galleys,
Bearing home the restful son of Sigurd. 20

So fell Harold, last of all the Vikings,
Scald, by scalds sung, Harold of the fair hair.

CURFEW

(1066)

The Curfew (*couvre-feu*) was a bell rung at 8 o'clock in winter and at sunset in summer, when all fires had to be extinguished. It also served as a call to prayers, and is still rung in some towns. The curfew law was instituted by William the Conqueror, to prevent sedition by keeping Englishmen within their houses after nightfall.

SOLEMNLY, mournfully,
Dealing its dole,
The Curfew Bell
Is beginning to toll.

Cover the embers, 5
And put out the light;
Toil comes with the morning,
And rest with the night.

Dark grow the windows, 10
And quenched is the fire;
Sound fades into silence,—
All footsteps retire.

22. scald] poet.

No voice in the chambers,
No sound in the hall!
Sleep and oblivion
Reign over all!

15

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

THE RED KING

(1100)

The death of William Rufus in the New Forest might be regarded as a Nemesis or poetic justice, not only on him for his cruelty in that district, but also on his father who had ruthlessly destroyed villages to make a hunting-ground there. It is not known for certain whether Rufus was killed by accident or design; probably the latter. His body was carried to Winchester Cathedral and unceremoniously buried under the tower, which fell a few years afterwards, 'because so foul a body lay beneath it'.

THE King was drinking in Malwood Hall,
There came in a monk before them all:
He thrust by squire, he thrust by knight,
Stood over against the dais aright;
And, 'The word of the Lord, thou cruel Red King, 5
The word of the Lord to thee I bring.
A grimly sweven I dreamt yestreen;
I saw thee lie under the hollins green,
And through thy heart an arrow keen;
And out of thy body a smoke did rise, 10
Which smirched the sunshine out of the skies:
So if thou God's anointed be
I rede thee unto thy soul thou see,
For mitre and pall thou hast y-sold,
False knight to Christ, for gain and gold; 15

7. sweven] dream.

And for this thy forest were digged down all,
Steading and hamlet and churches tall;
And Christes poor were ousten forth,
To beg their bread from south to north.
So tarry at home, and fast and pray,
Lest fiends hunt thee in the judgement-day.' 20

The Red King down from Malwood came;
His heart with wine was all aflame,
His eyne were shotten, red as blood,
He rated and swore, wherever he rode. 25
They roused a hart, that grimly brace,
A hart of ten, a hart of grease,
Fled over against the Kinges place.
The sun it blinded the Kinges ee,
A fathom behind his hocks shot he: 30
'Shoot thou,' quod he, 'in the fiendes name,
To lose such quarry were seven years' shame.'
And he hove up his hand to mark the game.
Tyrrel he shot full light, God wot;
For whether the saints they swerved the shot, 35
Or whether by treason, men knowen not,
But under the arm, in a secret part,
The iron fled through the Kinges heart.
The turf it squelched where the Red King fell:
And the fiends they carried his soul to hell, 40
Quod, 'His master's name it hath sped him well.'

Tyrrel he smiled full grim that day,
Quod, 'Shooting of kings is no bairns' play';
And he smote in the spurs, and fled fast away.
As he pricked along by Fritham plain, 45
The green tufts flew behind like rain;
The waters were out, and over the sward:
He swam his horse like a stalwart lord:
Men clepen that water Tyrrel's ford.

17. Steading] farm-house.

49. clepen] call.

By Rhinefield and by Osmondsleigh, 50
 Through glade and furze-brake fast drove he,
 Until he heard the roaring sea;
 Quod he, 'Those gay waves they call me.'
 By Mary's grace a seely boat
 On Christchurch bar did lie afloat; 55
 He gave the shipmen mark and groat,
 To ferry him over to Normandie,
 And there he fell to sanctuarie;
 God send his soul all bliss to see.
 And fend our princes every one, 60
 From foul mishap and trahison;
 But kings that harrow Christian men
 Shall England never bide again.

C. KINGSLEY.

58. *fell to sanctuarie.* Took refuge at the altar of the Church, from which his enemies might not remove him, except under penalty of excommunication.

THE WHITE SHIP

(1120)

Henry I had taken his only son William over to Normandy to be recognized as his successor to the Dukedom. During the return voyage to England the ship in which William was sailing struck on a rock at the mouth of the harbour and sank. The story that follows is supposed to be told by the only survivor.

BY none but me can the tale be told,
 The butcher of Rouen, poor Berold.
 (*Lands are swayed by a King on a throne.*)
 'Twas a royal train put forth to sea,
 Yet the tale can be told by none but me. 5
 (*The sea hath no King but God alone.*)

54. *seely*] timely.

King Henry held it as life's whole gain
That after his death his son should reign.

And next with his son he sailed to France
To claim the Norman allegiance. 10

'Twas sworn and sealed, and the day had come
When the King and the Prince might journey home.

The King set sail with the eve's south wind,
And soon he left that coast behind.

The Prince and all his, a princely show,
Remained in the good White Ship to go. 15

With noble knights and with ladies fair,
With courtiers and sailors gathered there,
Three hundred living souls we were:

And I Berold was the meanest hind 20
In all that train to the Prince assign'd.

And now he cried: 'Bring wine from below;
Let the sailors revel ere yet they row:

• 'Our speed shall o'ertake my father's flight
Though we sail from the harbour at midnight.' 25

The rowers made good cheer without check;
The lords and ladies obeyed his beck;
The night was light, and they danced on the deck.

Swifter and swifter the White Ship sped
Till she flew as the spirit flies from the dead: 30

As white as a lily glimmered she
Like a ship's fair ghost upon the sea.

And the Prince cried, 'Friends, 'tis the hour to sing!
Is a songbird's course so swift on the wing?'

And under the winter stars' still throng, 35
From brown throats, white throats, merry and strong,
The knights and the ladies raised a song.

A song,—nay, a shriek that rent the sky,
That leaped o'er the deep!—the grievous cry
Of three hundred living that now must die. 40

An instant shriek that sprang to the shock
As the ship's keel felt the sunken rock.

'Tis said that afar—a shrill strange sigh—
The King's ship heard it and knew not why.

Pale Fitz-Stephen stood by the helm 45
'Mid all those folk that the waves must whelm.

A great King's heir for the waves to whelm,
And a helpless pilot pale at the helm!

The ship was eager and sucked athirst,
By the stealthy stab of the sharp reef pierc'd. 50

A moment the pilot's senses spin,—
The next he snatched the Prince 'mid the din,
Cut the boat loose, and the youth leaped in.

A few friends leaped with him, standing near,
'Row! the sea's smooth and the night is clear!' 55

'What! none to be saved but these and I?'
'Row, row as you'd live! All here must die!'

Out of the churn of the choking ship,
Which the gulf grapples and the waves strip,
They struck with the strained oars' flash and dip. 60

'Twas then o'er the splitting bulwarks' brim
The Prince's sister screamed to him.

He gazed aloft, still rowing apace,
And through the whirled surf he knew her face.

To the toppling decks clave one and all 65
As a fly cleaves to a chamber-wall.

I Berold was clinging anear;
I prayed for myself and quaked with fear,
But I saw his eyes as he looked at her.

He knew her face and he heard her cry, 70
And he said, 'Put back! she must not die!'

And back with the current's force they reel
Like a leaf that's drawn to a water-wheel.

'Neath the ship's travail they scarce might float,
But he rose and stood in the rocking boat. 75

Low the poor ship leaned on the tide:
O'er the naked keel as she best might slide,
The sister toiled to the brother's side.

He reached an oar to her from below,
And stiffened his arms to clutch her so. 80

But now from the ship some spied the boat,
And 'Saved!' was the cry from many a throat.

And down to the boat they leaped and fell:
It turned as a bucket turns in a well,
And nothing was there but the surge and swell. 85

The Prince that was and the King to come,
There in an instant gone to his doom,

Despite of all England's bended knee
And maugre the Norman fealty!

89. maugre] despite.

He was a Prince of lust and pride; 90
He showed no grace till the hour he died.

When he should be King, he oft would vow,
He'd yoke the peasant to his own plough.
O'er him the ships score their furrows now.

God only knows where his soul did wake, 95
But I saw him die for his sister's sake.

By none but me can the tale be told,
• The butcher of Rouen, poor Berold.
(*Lands are swayed by a King on a throne.*)
'Twas a royal train put forth to sea, 100
Yet the tale can be told by none but me,
(*The sea hath no King but God alone.*)

D. G. ROSSETTI.

THE NORMAN BARON

(TWELFTH CENTURY)

For an account at first hand of the evil doings of the Norman barons during Stephen's reign see Gardiner's *Student's History of England*, p. 134 ('Anarchy').

In his chamber, weak and dying,
Was the Norman baron lying;
Loud, without, the tempest thundered,
And the castle-turret shook.

In this fight was Death the gainer, 5
Spite of vassal and retainer,
And the lands his sires had plundered,
Written in the Doomsday Book.

By his bed a monk was seated,
Who in humble voice repeated
Many a prayer and pater-noster,
From the missal on his knee;

10

And, amid the tempest pealing,
Sounds of bells came faintly stealing,
Bells, that from the neighbouring kloster
Rang for the Nativity.

15

In the hall the serf and vassal
Held, that night, their Christmas wassail;
Many a carol, old and saintly,
Sang the minstrels and the waits;

20

And so loud these Saxon gleemen
Sang to slaves the songs of freemen,
That the storm was heard but faintly,
Knocking at the castle-gates.

Till at length the lays they chanted
Reached the chamber terror-haunted,
Where the monk, with accents holy,
Whispered at the baron's ear.

25

Tears upon his eyelids glistened,
And he paused awhile and listened,
And the dying baron slowly
Turned his weary head to hear.

30

'Wassail for the kingly stranger
Born and cradled in a manger!
King like David, priest like Aaron,
Christ is born to set us free!'

35

And the lightning showed the sainted
Figures on the casement painted,
And exclaimed the shuddering baron,
'Miserere, Domine!'

40

18. wassail] health drinking.

In that hour of deep contrition,
He beheld, with clearer vision,
Through all outward show and fashion,
Justice, the Avenger, rise.

All the pomp of earth had vanished, 45
Falsehood and deceit were banished,
Reason spake more loud than passion,
And the truth wore no disguise.

Every vassal of his banner,
Every serf born to his manor, 50
All those wronged and wretched creatures,
By his hand were freed again.

And, as on the sacred missal
He recorded their dismissal,
Death relaxed his iron features, 55
And the monk replied, 'Amen!'

Many centuries have been numbered
Since in death the baron slumbered
By the convent's sculptured portal,
Mingling with the common dust: 60

But the good deed, through the ages
Living in historic pages,
Brighter grows and gleams immortal,
Unconsumed by moth or rust.

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

ROBIN HOOD

(TWELFTH CENTURY)

According to tradition Robin Hood was an outlaw who lived in Sherwood Forest (near Nottingham). He embodied the spirit of rebellion against oppressive feudalism, robbing the rich of the abbey and castle to relieve the necessities of the poor and oppressed. [See Scott's *Ivanhoe*.]

No! those days are gone away,
And their hours are old and gray,
And their minutes buried all
Under the down-trodden pall
Of the leaves of many years: 5
Many times have winter's shears,
Frozen North, and chilling East,
Sounded tempests to the feast
Of the forest's whispering fleeces,
Since men knew nor rent nor leases. 10

No, the bugle sounds no more,
And the twanging bow no more;
Silent is the ivory shrill
Past the heath and up the hill;
There is no mid-forest laugh, 15
Where lone Echo gives the half
To some wight, amaz'd to hear
Jesting, deep in forest drear.

On the fairest time of June
You may go, with sun or moon, 20
Or the seven stars to light you,
Or the polar ray to right you;
But you never may behold
Little John, or Robin bold;

Never one, of all the clan, 25
 Thrumming on an empty can
 Some old hunting ditty, while
 He doth his green way beguile
 To fair hostess Merriment,
 Down beside the pasture Trent; 30
 For he left the merry tale
 Messenger for spicy ale.

Gone, the merry morris din;
 Gone, the song of Gamelyn;
 Gone, the tough-belted outlaw 35
 Idling in the 'grenè shawe';
 All are gone away and past!
 And if Robin should be cast
 Sudden from his turfed grave,
 And if Marian should have 40
 Once again her forest days,
 She would weep, and he would craze:
 He would swear, for all his oaks,
 Fall'n beneath the dockyard strokes,
 Have rotted on the briny seas; 45
 She would weep that her wild bees
 Sang not to her—strange! that honey
 Can't be got without hard money!

So it is: yet let us sing,
 Honour to the old bow-string! 50
 Honour to the bugle-horn!
 Honour to the woods unshorn!
 Honour to the Lincoln green!
 Honour to the archer keen!
 Honour to tight little John, 55
 And the horse he rode upon!
 Honour to bold Robin Hood,
 Sleeping in the underwood!

Honour to maid Marian,
And to all the Sherwood-clan!
Though their days have hurried by
Let us two a burden try.

60

J. KEATS.

33. *morris*. An old-fashioned dance in fancy costume, common on May Day and other festivals, in which Robin Hood and his companions were favourite characters.

KING JOHN AND THE POPE

(1212)

As neither interdict nor excommunication had had any effect in forcing John to recognize Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury, Pope Innocent III threatened to depose him, and hand over the crown to Philip II of France, who raised a large army to support his claim. Thereupon, John, unable to depend upon his people to oppose the French, did homage before Pandulph the Pope's representative, and agreed to accept Langton as Archbishop and pay a yearly tribute to Rome for his kingdom.

ACT III, SCENE i.

King Philip. Here comes the holy legate of the pope.

Pandulph. Hail, you anointed deputies of heaven!
To thee, King John, my holy errand is.
I Pandulph, of fair Milan cardinal,
And from Pope Innocent the legate here, 5
Do in his name religiously demand
Why thou against the church, our holy mother,
So wilfully dost spurn; and, force perforce,
Keep Stephen Langton, chosen Archbishop
Of Canterbury, from that holy see? 10

62. burden] song.

This, in our foresaid holy father's name,
Pope Innocent, I do demand of thee.

King John. What earthly name to interrogatories
Can task the free breath of a sacred king?

Thou canst not, cardinal, devise a name 15

So slight, unworthy and ridiculous,

To charge me to an answer, as the pope.

Tell him this tale; and from the mouth of England

Add thus much more: that no Italian priest

Shall tithe or toll in our dominions; 20

But as we under heaven are supreme head,

So under him that great supremacy,

Where we do reign, we will alone uphold,

Without the assistance of a mortal hand:

So tell the pope; all reverence set apart 25

To him, and his usurp'd authority.

King Philip. Brother of England, you blaspheme
in this.

King John. Though you and all the kings of
Christendom

Are led so grossly by this meddling priest,

Dreading the curse that money may buy out; 30

And, by the merit of vile gold, dross, dust,

Purchase corrupted pardon of a man,

Who in that sale sells pardon from himself;

Though you and all the rest so grossly led

This juggling witchcraft with revenue cherish; 35

Yet I alone, alone do me oppose

Against the pope, and count his friends my foes.

Pandulph. Then, by the lawful power that I have,

Thou shalt stand curs'd and excommunicate:

And blessed shall he be that doth revolt 40

From his allegiance to a heretic;

And meritorious shall that hand be call'd,

Canonized and worshipp'd as a saint,

That takes away by any secret course

Thy hateful life. 45

ACT V, SCENE i.

[John yields after the insurrection of the barons and the French invasion.]

King John. Thus have I yielded up into your hand
The circle of my glory.

Pandulph. [*Giving* JOHN *the crown.*] Take again
From this my hand, as holding of the pope,
Your sovereign greatness and authority.

King John. Now keep your holy word: go meet
the French, 50

And from his holiness use all your power
To stop their marches 'fore we are inflam'd.

Our discontented counties do revolt,
Our people quarrel with obedience,
Swearing allegiance and the love of soul 55

To stranger blood, to foreign royalty.

This inundation of mistemper'd humour
Rests by you only to be qualified:

Then pause not; for the present time's so sick,
That present medicine must be minister'd, 60
Or overthrow incurable ensues.

Pandulph. It was my breath that blew this tem-
pest up

Upon your stubborn usage of the pope;
But since you are a gentle convertite,
My tongue shall hush again this storm of war 65

And make fair weather in your blustering land.

On this Ascension-day, remember well,

Upon your oath of service to the pope,

Go I to make the French lay down their arms.

ACT V, SCENE ii.

[Pandulph interviews the French leader.]

Pandulph. Hail, noble prince of France! 70
The next is this: King John hath reconcil'd
Himself to Rome; his spirit is come in

That so stood out against the holy church,
The great metropolis and see of Rome.
Therefore thy threat'ning colours now wind up, 75
And tame the savage spirit of wild war,
That, like a lion foster'd up at hand,
It may lie gently at the foot of peace,
And be no further harmful than in show.

Lewis. Your grace shall pardon me; I will not
back: 80

I am too high-born to be propertied,
To be a secondary at control,
Or useful serving-man and instrument
To any sovereign state throughout the world.
Your breath first kindled the dead coal of wars 85
Between this chastis'd kingdom and myself,
And brought in matter that should feed this fire;
And now 'tis far too huge to be blown out
With that same weak wind which enkindled it.
You taught me how to know the face of right, 90
Acquainted me with interest to this land,
Yea, thrust this enterprise into my heart;
And come you now to tell me John hath made
His peace with Rome? What is that peace to me?
I, by the honour of my marriage-bed, 95
After young Arthur, claim this land for mine;
And, now it is half-conquer'd, must I back
Because that John hath made his peace with Rome?
Am I Rome's slave? What penny hath Rome borne,
What men provided, what munition sent, 100
To underprop this action? is't not I
That undergo this charge? who else but I,
And such as to my claim are liable,
Sweat in this business and maintain this war?
Have I not heard these islanders shout out, 105
Vive le roy! as I have bank'd their towns?
Have I not here the best cards for the game
To win this easy match play'd for a crown?

106. bank'd] besieged.

And shall I now give o'er the yielded set?
No, no, on my soul, it never shall be said. 110

Pandulph. You look but on the outside of this
work.

Lewis. Outside or inside, I will not return
Till my attempt so much be glorified
As to my ample hope was promised
Before I drew this gallant head of war, 115
And cull'd these fiery spirits from the world,
To outlook conquest and to win renown
Even in the jaws of danger and of death.

W. SHAKESPEARE (from *King John*).

ENGLAND

(1216)

At the death of John the English barons soon began to desert the invading army of the French, and rallied round the boy-king Henry III, who became the centre of national hopes and aspirations.

THIS England never did, nor never shall,
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
But when it first did help to wound itself.
Now these her princes are come home again,
Come the three corners of the world in arms, 5
And we shall shock them. Nought shall make us rue,
If England to itself do rest but true.

W. SHAKESPEARE (from *King John*).

SIMON DE MONTFORT

(1265)

The misgovernment of Henry III had led to civil war, which, by the battle of Lewes in 1264, left Simon de Montfort practical ruler of England. In 1265 he summoned the first Parliament in which representatives of both counties and towns sat together. But his rule did not last for many months, and at the battle of Evesham he was defeated by the royalist party under Gloucester and Prince Edward (afterwards Edward I). Montfort himself was killed in the battle, but he was for long afterwards regarded by the English people as a martyr for justice and religion. The verses which follow are a translation of a contemporary poem.

IN song my grief shall find relief,
 Sad is my verse and rude;
 I sing in tears our gentle peers
 Who fell for England's good.
 Our peace they sought, for us they fought, 5
 For us they dared to die;
 And where they sleep, a mangled heap,
 Their wounds for vengeance cry.
On Evesham's plain is Montfort slain,
Well skill'd the war to guide; 10
Where streams his gore shall all deplore
Fair England's flower and pride.

Ere Tuesday's sun its course had run
 Our noblest chiefs had bled.
 While rush'd to fight each gallant knight, 15
 Their dastard vassals fled.
 Still undismay'd, with trenchant blade
 They hew'd their desperate way:
 Not strength or skill to Edward's will,
 But numbers gave the day. 20
On Evesham's plain, &c.

Yet, by the blow that laid thee low,
 Brave earl, one palm was given;
 Nor less at thine than Becket's shrine
 Shall rise our vows to heaven! 25

Our church and laws, your common cause,
Twas his the church to save,
Our rights restor'd, thou, generous lord,
Shalt triumph in thy grave.

On Evesham's plain, &c.

30

Each righteous lord who braved the sword,
And for our safety died,
With conscience pure shall aye endure,
Our martyr'd saint beside.
That martyr'd saint was never faint
To ease the poor man's care;
With gracious will he shall fulfil
Our just and earnest prayer.

35

On Evesham's plain, &c.

On Montfort's breast a hair-cloth vest
His pious soul proclaim'd;
With ruffian band, the ruthless band
That sacred emblem maim'd:
And, to assuage their impious rage,
His lifeless corpse defaced,
Whose powerful arm long saved from harm
The realm his virtues graced.

40

45

On Evesham's plain, &c.

Brave martyr'd chief! no more our grief
For thee or thine shall flow;
Among the bless'd in heaven ye rest
From all your toils below.
But, for the few, the gallant crew,
Who here in bonds remain,
Christ condescend their woes to end,
And break the tyrant's chain!

50

55

On Evesham's plain, &c.

G. ELLIS.

THE BARD

(1283)

A PINDARIC ODE

Edward I in subduing Wales, which had supported Simon de Montfort, did his work thoroughly and ruthlessly, but at the same time made submission easy by granting a certain measure of local government. The massacre of the bards is legendary.

'RUIN seize thee, ruthless King!
Confusion on thy banners wait!
Tho' fann'd by Conquest's crimson wing
They mock the air with idle state.
Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail, 5
Nor e'en thy virtues, tyrant, shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears!'
—Such were the sounds that o'er the crested pride
Of the first Edward scatter'd wild dismay 10
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his long array:—
Stout Glo'ster stood aghast in speechless trance;
'To arms!' cried Mortimer, and couch'd his quivering
lance.

On a rock, whose haughty brow 15
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of woe
With haggard eyes the Poet stood;
(Loose his beard and hoary hair
Stream'd like a meteor to the troubled air) 20
And with a master's hand and prophet's fire
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre:

5. hauberk] coat of mail.

‘Hark, how each giant oak and desert-cave
Sighs to the torrent’s awful voice beneath!
O’er thee, O King! their hundred arms they wave, 25
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe:
Vocal no more, since Cambria’s fatal day,
To high-born Hoel’s harp, or soft Llewellyn’s lay.

‘Cold is Cadwallo’s tongue,
That hush’d the stormy main: 30
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed:
Mountains, ye mourn in vain
Modred, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topt head.
On dreary Arvon’s shore they lie 35
Smear’d with gore and ghastly pale:
Far, far aloof the affrighted ravens sail;
The famish’d eagle screams, and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear as the light that visits these sad eyes, 40
Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country’s cries—
No more I weep; They do not sleep;
On yonder cliffs, a grisly band,
I see them sit; They linger yet, 45
Avengers of their native land:
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.

‘Weave the warp and weave the woof,
The winding-sheet of Edward’s race: 50
Give ample room and verge enough
The characters of hell to trace.
Mark the year and mark the night
When Severn shall re-echo with affright
The shrieks of death thro’ Berkley’s roof that ring, 55
Shrieks of an agonizing king!

She-wolf of France, with unrelepting fangs
That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled mate,
From thee be born, who o'er thy country hangs
The scourge of Heaven! What terrors round him
wait!

60

Amazement in his van, with Flight combined,
And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude behind.

'Mighty victor, mighty lord,
Low on his funeral couch he lies!

No pitying heart, no eye, afford

65

• A tear to grace his obsequies.

Is the sable warrior fled?

Thy son is gone. He rests among the dead.

The swarm that in thy noon-tide beam were born?

—Gone to salute the rising morn.

70

Fair laughs the Morn, and soft the zephyr blows,

While proudly riding o'er the azure realm

In gallant trim the gilded Vessel goes:

Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm:

Regardless of the sweeping Whirlwind's sway,

75

That hush'd in grim repose expects his evening prey.

'Fill high the sparkling bowl,

The rich repast prepare;

Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast:

Close by the regal chair

80

Fell Thirst and Famine scowl

A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.

Heard ye the din of battle bray,

Lance to lance, and horse to horse?

Long years of havock urge their destined course, 85

And thro' the kindred squadrons mow their way.

Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,

With many a foul and midnight murder fed,

Revere his Consort's faith, his Father's fame,

And spare the meek usurper's holy head!

90

Above, below, the rose of snow,

Twined with her blushing foe, we spread:
The bristled boar in infant-gore
Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
Now, brothers, bending o'er the accursèd loom, 95
Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

'Edward, lo! to sudden fate
(Weave we the woof; The thread is spun;)
Half of thy heart we consecrate.
(The web is wove; The work is done;) 100
Stay, O stay! nor thus forlorn
Leave me unblest'd, unpitied, here to mourn:
In yon bright track that fires the western skies
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.
But O! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height 105
Descending slow their glittering skirts unroll?
Visions of glory, spare my aching sight,
Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!
No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail:—
All hail, ye genuine kings! Britannia's issue, hail! 110

'Girt with many a baron bold
Sublime their starry fronts they rear;
And gorgeous dames, and statesmen old
In bearded majesty, appear.
In the midst a form divine! 115
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-Line:
Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face
Attemper'd sweet to virgin-grace.
What strings symphonious tremble in the air,
What strains of vocal transport round her play? 120
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear;
They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
Bright Rapture calls, and soaring as she sings,
Waves in the eye of Heaven her many-colour'd
wings.

'The verse adorn again
 Fierce War, and faithful Love,
 And Truth severe, by fairy Fiction drest.
 In buskin'd measures move
 Pale Grief, and pleasing Pain,
 With Horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast. 130
 A voice as of the cherub-choir
 Gales from blooming Eden bear,
 And distant warblings lessen on my ear
 That lost in long futurity expire.
 Fond impious man, think'st thou yon sanguine cloud 135
 Raised by thy breath, has quench'd the orb of day?
 'To-morrow he repairs the golden flood
 And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
 Enough for me: with joy I see
 The different doom our fates assign: 140
 Be thine Despair and sceptred Care;
 To triumph and to die are mine.'
 —He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
 Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endless night.

T. GRAY.

A Pindaric Ode, i.e. an ode imitating the form employed by the Greek poet Pindar (died 448 B.C.). See Edmund Gosse's *Gray (English Men of Letters Series)*, ch. vi.

28, 29. *Hoel, Llewellyn, Cadwallo*. Welsh bards.

49. *warp*. The threads that go lengthwise; crossing them is the 'woof'.

57. *She-wolf of France*. Isabella, wife of Edward II.

63. *Mighty victor*. The Black Prince died in 1377, and Edward III, old and feeble, was at the mercy of intriguers. On his death-bed he was deserted by all, the last person even robbing him of his finger-rings.

70. *the rising morn*. Richard II.

71. *the Morn*. A personification of the beginning of Richard II's reign.

87. *towers of Julius*. The Tower of London, commonly supposed to have been built by Julius Caesar: the scene of the death of Henry VI ('the meek usurper') and of the murder of the sons of Edward IV by Richard III (whose badge was a boar).

110. *genuine kings*. The Tudors, who had Welsh blood in their veins.
125. *The verse adorn again, &c.* An allusion to Spenser, with whom English poetry revived.
128. *buskin'd measures*. The works of Shakespeare and his fellow playwrights [*buskin* = the high boot—the emblem of Tragedy].

DEATH OF ALEXANDER III

(1285)

This contemporary cantus shows the consternation produced by the death of Alexander III. His prosperous reign had done as much as his father's to weld Scotland into a strong and civilized nation. His untimely death in 1285 left her exposed to the horrors of a disputed succession and the danger of English usurpation.

WHEN Alysandyr our King was dede
 That Scotland led in love and lé;
 Away was sons of ale and brede,
 Of wine and wax, of gamyn and glé;
 Our gold was changed into lede; 5
 Christ, born into Virginité,
 Succour Scotland and remede
 That stad is in perplexyté.

ANONYMOUS.

- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 2. lé] law. | 3. sons] plenty. | 4. gamyn] sport. |
| 7. remede] remedy. | 8. stad] bestead. | |

BANNOCKBURN

(1314)

The battle of Bannockburn was the end of Edward I's attempt by force to make Scotland a part of England. Wallace's rebellion had failed, largely because he had not a united Scotland at his back—the nobles had stood aloof; but he had succeeded in rousing Scotland to a sense of nationality of which Robert Bruce took full advantage while Edward II was quarrelling with his barons. Scotland remained a separate nation, with all the advantages and disadvantages of separation, till more settled times proved that union with England would be a source of strength to both countries.

[A plan of the battle will be found in Gardiner's *Historical Atlas*.]

THE EVE OF BATTLE

THE Monarch rode along the van,
The foe's approaching force to scan,
His line to marshal and to range,
And ranks to square, and fronts to change.
Alone he rode—from head to heel 5
Sheathed in his ready arms of steel;
Nor mounted yet on war-horse wight,
But, till more near the shock of fight,
Reining a palfrey low and light.
A diadem of gold was set 10
Above his bright steel basinet.
Truncheon or leading staff he lacks,
Bearing, instead, a battle-axe.
He ranged his soldiers for the fight,
Accoutred thus, in open sight 15
Of either host. Three bowshots far,
Paused the deep front of England's war,
And rested on their arms awhile,
To close and rank their warlike file,
And hold high council, if that night 20
Should view the strife, or dawning light.

O gay, yet fearful to behold,
 Flashing with steel and rough with gold,
 And bristled o'er with bills and spears,
 With plumes and pennons waving fair, 25
 Was that bright battle-front! for there
 Rode England's King and peers:
 And who, that saw that monarch ride,
 His kingdom battled by his side,
 Could then his direful doom foretell! 30
 Fair was his seat in knightly selle,
 And in his sprightly eye was set
 Some spark of the Plantagenet.
 Though light and wandering was his glance,
 It flash'd at sight of shield and lance. 35
 'Know'st thou,' he said, 'De Argentine,
 Yon knight who marshals thus their line?'
 'The tokens on his helmet tell
 The Bruce, my Liege: I know him well.'
 'And shall the audacious traitor brave 40
 The presence where our banners wave?
 Still must the rebel dare our wrath?
 Set on him, sweep him from our path!'
 And, at King Edward's signal, soon
 Dash'd from the ranks Sir Henry Boune. 45

THE FIRST BLOW

Of Hereford's high blood he came,
 A race renown'd for knightly fame.
 He burn'd before his Monarch's eye
 To do some deed of chivalry.
 He spurr'd his steed, he couch'd his lance, 50
 And darted on the Bruce at once.
 As motionless as rocks, that bide
 The wrath of the advancing tide,
 The Bruce stood fast. Each breast beat high,
 And dazzled was each gazing eye, 55

The heart had hardly time to think,
 The eyelid scarce had time to wink,
 While on the King, like flash of flame,
 Spurr'd to full speed the war-horse came!
 The partridge may the falcon mock 60
 If that slight palfrey stand the shock;
 But, swerving from the Knight's career,
 Just as they met, Bruce shunn'd the spear.
 Onward the baffled warrior bore
 His course—but soon his course was o'er! 65
 High in his stirrups stood the King,
 And gave his battle-axe the swing.
 Right on De Boune, the whiles he pass'd,
 Fell that stern dint, the first, the last!
 Such strength upon the blow was put, 70
 The helmet crash'd like hazel-nut;
 The axe-shaft, with its brazen clasp,
 Was shiver'd to the gauntlet grasp.
 Springs from the blow the startled horse,
 Drops to the plain the lifeless corse; 75
 First of that fatal field, how soon,
 How sudden, fell the fierce De Boune!

THE MORN OF BATTLE

Now onward, and in open view,
 The countless ranks of England drew,
 Dark rolling like the ocean-tide 80
 When the rough west hath chafed his pride,
 And his deep roar sends challenge wide
 To all that bars his way!
 In front the gallant archers trode,
 The men-at-arms behind them rode, 85
 And midmost of the phalanx broad
 The Monarch held his sway.
 Beside him many a war-horse fumes,
 Around him waves a sea of plumes,

Where many a knight in battle known, 90
 And some who spurs had first braced on,
 And deem'd that fight should see them won,
 King Edward's hests obey.

THE ENGLISH ARCHERS

Then stepp'd each yeoman forth a pace,
 Glanced at the intervening space, 95
 And raised his left hand high;
 To the right ear the cords they bring;
 At once ten thousand bow-strings ring,
 Ten thousand arrows fly!
 Nor paused on the devoted Scot 100
 The ceaseless fury of their shot;
 As fiercely and as fast
 Forth whistling came the grey-goose wing
 As the wild hailstones pelt and ring
 Adown December's blast. 105
 Nor mountain targe of tough bull-hide,
 Nor lowland mail, that storm may bide;
 Woe, woe to Scotland's banner'd pride
 If the fell shower may last!
 Upon the right, behind the wood, 110
 Each by his steed dismounted, stood
 The Scottish chivalry;
 With foot in stirrup, hand on mane,
 Fierce Edward Bruce can scarce restrain
 His own keen heart, his eager train, 115
 Until the archers gain'd the plain;
 Then 'Mount, ye gallants free!'
 He cried; and, vaulting from the ground,
 His saddle every horseman found.
 On high their glittering crests they toss, 120
 As springs the wild-fire from the moss;
 The shield hangs down on every breast,
 Each ready lance is in the rest,

And loud shouts Edward Bruce,—
'Forth, Marshal! on the peasant foe!
We'll tame the terrors of their bow,
And cut the bow-string loose!'

125

DEFEAT OF THE ARCHERS

Then spurs were dash'd in chargers' flanks,
They rush'd among the archer ranks.
No spears were there the shock to let,
No stakes to turn the charge were set,
And how shall yeoman's armour slight
Stand the long lance and mace of might?
Or what may their short swords avail
'Gainst barbed horse and shirt of mail?
Amid their ranks the chargers sprung,
High o'er their heads the weapons swung,
And shriek and groan and vengeful shout
Give note of triumph and of rout!
Awhile, with stubborn hardihood,
Their English hearts the strife made good.
Borne down at length on every side,
Compell'd to flight, they scatter wide.

130

135

140

THE CAVALRY CHARGE

The King with scorn beheld their flight.
'Are these,' he said, 'our yeomen wight?
Each braggart churl could boast before
Twelve Scottish lives his baldric bore!
Fitter to plunder chase or park
Than make a manly foe their mark.
Forward, each gentleman and knight!
Let gentle blood show generous might,
And chivalry redeem the fight!'

145

150

130. let] hinder, stem. 147. baldric] belt, quiver.

To rightward of the wild affray
 The field show'd fair and level way;
 But, in mid-space, the Bruce's care 155
 Had bored the ground with many a pit,
 With turf and brushwood hidden yet,
 That form'd a ghastly snare.
 Rushing, ten thousand horsemen came,
 With spears in fest and hearts on flame, 160
 That panted for the shock!
 With blazing crests and banners spread,
 And trumpet-clang and clamour dread,
 The wide plain thunder'd to their tread
 As far as Stirling rock. 165
 Down! down! in headlong overthrow,
 Horseman and horse, the foremost go,
 Wild floundering on the field!
 The first are in destruction's gorge,
 Their followers wildly o'er them urge; 170
 The knightly helm and shield,
 The mail, the acton, and the spear,
 Strong hand, high heart, are useless here!

THE TIDE TURNS

The tug of strife to flag begins,
 Though neither loses yet nor wins. 175
 High rides the sun, thick rolls the dust,
 And feebler speeds the blow and thrust.

THE CAMP-FOLLOWERS

The multitude that watch'd afar,
 Rejected from the ranks of war,
 Had not unmoved beheld the fight, 180
 When strove the Bruce for Scotland's right;

172. acton] leather jacket.

Each heart had caught the patriot spark,
Old man and stripling, priest and clerk,
Bondsman and serf; even female hand
Stretch'd to the hatchet or the brand. 185
To arms they flew,—axe, club, or spear,—
And mimic ensigns high they rear,
And, like a banner'd host afar,
Bear down on England's wearied war.

FLIGHT OF EDWARD

Already scatter'd o'er the plain, 190
Reproof, command, and counsel vain,
The rearward squadrons fled amain,
Or made but doubtful stay;
But when they mark'd the seeming show
Of fresh and fierce and marshall'd foe, 195
The boldest broke array.
O give their hapless prince his due!
In vain the royal Edward threw
His person 'mid the spears,
Cried 'Fight!' to terror and despair, 200
Menaced, and wept, and tore his hair,
And cursed their caitiff fears;
Till Pembroke turn'd his bridle rein,
And forced him from the fatal plain.

SIR W. SCOTT
(from *The Lord of the Isles*).

ROBERT BRUCE'S ADDRESS TO HIS ARMY
BEFORE THE BATTLE OF BANNOCK-
BURN

(1314)

[See introduction to last poem.]

SCOTS, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victorie.

Now 's the day, and now 's the hour; 5
See the front o' battle lour!
See approach proud Edward's power—
Chains and slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave? 10
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee!

Wha for Scotland's King and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand, or freeman fa'? 15
Let him follow me!

By oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free! 20

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Let us do or die!

R. BURNS.

DEPOSITION AND DEATH OF EDWARD II

(1327)

From 1322 to 1326 Edward II was controlled almost entirely by the Despensers, who made enemies everywhere. Queen Isabella, an able woman, alienated from the King, probably contemptuous of his incompetence and jealous of the power of the Despensers, intrigued with Roger Mortimer to dethrone him. The Despensers were hanged and Edward was compelled to resign the crown. Eight months later he was murdered in Berkeley Castle.

(The King, being deposed, surrenders his crown into the hands of the Bishop of Winchester and the Earl of Leicester at Killingworth Castle.)

King Edward.

[Taking off the crown.]

Two kings in England cannot reign at once.

But stay a while: let me be king till night,

That I may gaze upon this glittering crown;

So shall my eyes receive their last content,

My head, the latest honour due to it,

And jointly both yield up their wishèd right.

Continue ever thou celestial sun;

Let never silent night possess this clime:

Stand still, you watches of the element;

All times and seasons, rest you at a stay,

That Edward may be still fair England's King!

But day's bright beam doth vanish fast away,

And needs I must resign my wishèd crown.

Inhuman creatures, nursed with tiger's milk,

Why gape you for your sovereign's overthrow?

My diadem, I mean, and guiltless life.

See, monsters, see! I'll wear my crown again.

[Putting on the crown.]

What, fear you not the fury of your king?—
But, hapless Edward, thou art fondly led;
They pass not for thy frowns as late they did, 20
But seek to make a new-elected king;
Which fills my mind with strange despairing thoughts,
Which thoughts are martyrèd with endless torments;
And in this torment comfort find I none,
But that I feel the crown upon my head; 25
And therefore let me wear it yet a while.

Trussel. My lord, the parliament must have
present news;
And therefore say, will you resign or no?

[*The KING rageth.*

King Edward. I'll not resign, but whilst I live
be king.

Traitors, be gone, and join you with Mortimer! 30
Elect, conspire, install, do what you will:
Their blood and yours shall seal these treacheries.

Bishop of Winchester. This answer we'll return,
and so farewell. [*Going with TRUSSEL.*

Leicester. Call them again, my lord, and speak
them fair;

For if they go, the prince shall lose his right. 35

King Edward. Call thou them back; I have no
power to speak.

Leicester. My lord, the king is willing to resign.

Bishop of Winchester. If he be not, let him
choose.

King Edward. O would I might! but heaven
and earth conspire

To make me miserable. Here, receive my crown.
Receive it? no, these innocent hands of mine 41
Shall not be guilty of so foul a crime:

He of you all that most desires my blood,
And will be call'd the murderer of a king,
Take it. What, are you mov'd? pity you me? 45
Then send for unrelenting Mortimer,

And Isabel, whose eyes, being turn'd to steel,
Will sooner sparkle fire than shed a tear.
Yet stay; for rather than I'll look on them,
Here, here! [*Gives the crown.*] Now, sweet God of
heaven, 50
Make me despise this transitory pomp,
And sit for aye enthronized in heaven!
Come, death, and with thy fingers close my eyes,
Or if I live, let me forget myself!

(*Berkeley Castle. The King is left alone with
Lightborn, a murderer.*)

King Edward. Who's there? what light is that?
wherefore com'st thou? 55

Lightborn. To comfort you, and bring you joyful
news.

King Edward. Small comfort finds poor Edward
in thy looks:

Villain, I know thou com'st to murder me.

Lightborn. To murder you, my most gracious
lord!

Far is it from my heart to do you harm. 60

The Queen sent me to see how you were us'd,

For she relents at this your misery:

And what eyes can refrain from shedding tears,

To see a king in this most piteous state?

King Edward. Weep'st thou already? list a
while to me, 65

And then thy heart, were it as Gurney's is,

Or as Matrevis', hewn from the Caucasus,

Yet will it melt, ere I have done my tale.

This dungeon where they keep me is the sink

Wherein the filth of all the castle falls. 70

Lightborn. O villains!

King Edward. And there, in mire and puddle,
have I stood

This ten days' space; and, lest that I should sleep,

One plays continually upon a drum;

They give me bread and water, being a king; 75
So that, for want of sleep and sustenance,
My mind's distemper'd, and my body's numb'd,
And whether I have limbs or no I know not.
O, would my blood dropp'd out from every vein,
As doth this water from my tatter'd robes! 80
Tell Isabel, the Queen, I look'd not thus,
When for her sake I ran at tilt in France,
And there unhors'd the Duke of Cleremont.

Lightborn. O, speak no more, my lord! this
breaks my heart.

Lie on this bed, and rest yourself a while. 85

King Edward. These looks of thine can harbour
nought but death;

I see my tragedy written in thy brows.
Yet stay a while; forbear thy bloody hand,
And let me see the stroke before it comes,
That even then when I shall lose my life, 90
My mind may be more steadfast on my God.

Lightborn. What means your highness to mistrust
me thus?

King Edward. What mean'st thou to dissemble
with me thus?

Lightborn. These hands were never stain'd with
innocent blood,

Nor shall they now be tainted with a king's. 95

King Edward. Forgive my thought for having
such a thought.

One jewel have I left; receive thou this:

[*Giving jewel.*

Still fear I, and I know not what's the cause,
But every joint shakes as I give it thee,
O, if thou harbour'st murder in thy heart, 100
Let this gift change thy mind, and save thy soul!
Know that I am a king: O, at that name
I feel a hell of grief! where is my crown?
Gone, gone! and do I remain alive?

Lightborn. You're overwatch'd, my lord; lie down
and rest. 105

King Edward. But that grief keeps me waking
I should sleep;

For not these ten days have these eye-lids clos'd.
Now, as I speak, they fall; and yet with fear
Open again. O wherefore sitt'st thou here?

Lightborn. If you mistrust me, I'll be gone, my
lord. 110

King Edward. No, no; for if thou mean'st to
murder me,

Thou wilt return again; and therefore stay. [*Sleeps.*

Lightborn. He sleeps.

King Edward. [*waking.*] O!

Let me not die; yet stay, O stay a while!

Lightborn. How now, my lord? 115

King Edward. Something still buzzeth in mine
ears,

And tells me, if I sleep I never wake;
This fear is that which makes me tremble thus;
And therefore tell me, wherefore art thou come?

Lightborn. To rid thee of thy life.—Matrevis, come.

Enter MATREVIS and GURNEY.

King Edward. I am too weak and feeble to
resist.— 121

Assist me, sweet God, and receive my soul!

MATREVIS *re-enters*. KING EDWARD *is murdered*.

C. MARLOWE (from *Edward II*).

CREÇY

(1346)

The refrain of the poem is founded on Froissart, who says that, when asked to send reinforcements to his son the Black Prince, the King replied: 'Is my son dead, unhorsed, or so badly wounded that he cannot support himself?' 'Nothing of the sort, thank God,' rejoined the knight, 'but he is in so hot an engagement that he has great need of your help.' 'Now Sir Thomas,' answered the King, 'return to those that sent you, and tell them from me not to send again for me this day, nor expect that I shall come, let what will happen, as long as my son has life; and say that I command them to let the boy win his spurs, for I am determined, if it please God, that all the glory of this day shall be given to him, and to those into whose care I have entrusted him.' The knight returned to his lords and related the King's answer, which mightily encouraged them, and made them repent they had ever sent such a message.

AT Crécy by Somme in Ponthieu
 High up on a windy hill
 A mill stands out like a tower;
 King Edward stands on the mill.
 The plain is seething below 5
 As Vesuvius seethes with flame,
 But O! not with fire, but gore,
 Earth incarnadined o'er,
 Crimson with shame and with fame:—
 To the King run the messengers, crying 10
 'Thy Son is hard-press'd to the dying!'
 —'Let alone: for to-day will be written in story
 To the great world's end, and for ever:
 So let the boy have the glory.'

Erin and Gwalia there 15

With England are rank'd against France;
Outfacing the oriflamme red

The red dragons of Merlin advance:—

As a harvest in autumn renew'd

The lances bend o'er the fields; 20

Snow-thick our arrow-heads white

Level the foe as they light;

Knighthood to yeomanry yields:—
Proud heart, the King watches, as higher
Goes the blaze of the battle, and nigher:— 25

'To-day is a day will be written in story

To the great world's end, and for ever!

Let the boy alone have the glory.'

Harold at Senlac-on-Sea

By Norman arrow laid low,— 30

When the shield-wall was breach'd by the shaft,

—Thou art avenged by the bow!

Chivalry! name of romance!

Thou art henceforth but a name!

Weapon that none can withstand, 35

Yew in the Englishman's hand,

Flight-shaft unerring in aim!

As a lightning-struck forest the foemen

Shiver down to the stroke of the bowmen:—

'O to-day is a day will be written in story 40

To the great world's end, and for ever!

So, let the boy have the glory.'

Pride of Liguria's shore

Genoa wrestles in vain;

Vainly Bohemia's King 45

Kinglike is laid with the slain.

The Blood-lake is wiped out in blood,

The shame of the centuries o'er;

Where the pride of the Norman had sway

The lions lord over the fray, 50

The legions of France are no more:—

—The Prince to his father kneels lowly;
 —His is the battle! his wholly!
 'For to-day is a day will be written in story
 To the great world's end, and for ever:—⁵⁵
 So, let him have the spurs, and the glory!'

F. T. PALGRAVE.

15. *Erin and Gwalia*. The Irish and Welsh contingent, armed with large knives, fell upon earls, barons, knights, and squires who were hampered by the flight of the Genoese bowmen, and slew many.

17. *oriflamme*. The royal standard of France.

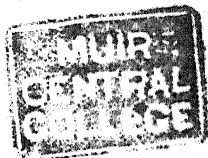
18. *dragons of Merlin*. The Welsh flag. Merlin was the wizard at the court of King Arthur.

29. *Senlac-on-Sea*. Battle of Hastings, 1066. See the account in Lytton's *Harold*.

43. *Liguria*. The district of Italy whence came the Genoese bowmen.

45. *Bohemia's King*. The morning after the battle the blind King of Bohemia was found dead in the field with his companions. He had persuaded them to lead him into the fight, with bridles tied together, that he might strike one blow for France and chivalry.

47. *Blood-lake (Senlac)*. Battle of Hastings.



WAT TYLER'S SONG

(1381) •

The first two lines of this poem are contemporary; they were used as a party cry by John Ball, one of the leaders in the 'Peasants' Revolt' of 1381. The peasants demanded the abolition of serfdom, the liberty to buy or sell at fairs and markets free of taxes, and the fixing of their rent at a certain amount per acre.

[See Green's *Short History*, pp. 250-2.]

'WHEN Adam delved and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?'

Wretched is the infant's lot,
Born within the straw-roof'd cot;
Be he generous, wise, or brave, 5
He must only be a slave.
Long, long labour, little rest,
Still to toil to be oppressed;
Drain'd by taxes of his store,
Punished next for being poor: 10
This is the poor wretch's lot,
Born within the straw-roof'd cot.

While the peasant works,—to sleep,
What the peasant sows,—to reap,
On the couch of ease to lie, 15
Rioting in revelry;
Be he villain, be he fool,
Still to hold despotic rule,
Trampling on his slaves with scorn!
This is to be nobly born. 20

'When Adam delved and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?'

R. SOUTHEY.

i. delved] dug.

LYRA HISTORICA

POEMS OF BRITISH HISTORY

A.D. 61-1910

SELECTED BY

M. E. WINDSOR

AND

J. TURRAL

PART II: 1388-1641

OXFORD

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

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Thanks for permission to include poems and extracts are due to the following:—

Mr. T. Fisher Unwin for A. M. F. Robinson's *A Ballad of Orleans*.

Mr. Henry Newbolt for *Drake's Drum*, from 'The Island Race', published by Elkin Mathews.

Mr. T. Watts-Dunton for extracts from Swinburne's *Mary Stuart* and *The Armada*.

PART II

OTTERBURN

(1388)

The Scots under Douglas invaded England as far as Newcastle, where they met Henry Percy (Hotspur), who swore to redeem in three days his lance, which Douglas had taken in a skirmish. The English came upon the Scots by moonlight at Otterburn, and gave battle at once. Douglas rushed into the middle of their army and was killed, though the battle went on till morning, when Percy was taken prisoner. The result of the battle is a matter of dispute. This version, taken from Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Border*, naturally relates the event with a Scottish bias. The English versions tell the story just as much in favour of the English. Froissart says that despite the disasters on both sides the Scotch remained masters of the field; but he gives both armies great credit for their desperate valour.

The Douglas was not buried 'at a bracken bush', but in Melrose Abbey.

IT fell about the Lammas tide,
When the muir-men win their hay,
The doughty earl of Douglas rode
Into England, to catch a prey.

He chose the Gordons and the Græmes, 5
With them the Lindesays, light and gay;
But the Jardines wald not with him ride,
And they rue it to this day.

And he has burn'd the dales of Tyne,
And part of Bambrough shire; 10
And three good towers on Roxburgh fells,
He left them all on fire.

1. Lammas] August 1.

And he march'd up to Newcastle,
And rode it round about;
'O wha's the lord of this castle,
Or wha's the lady o't?'

15

But up spake proud Lord Percy, then,
And O but he spake hie!
'I am the lord of this castle,
My wife's the lady gay.'

20

'If thou'rt the lord of this castle,
Sae weel it pleases me!
For, ere I cross the border fells,
The tane of us shall die.'

He took a long spear in his hand,
Shod with the metal free,
And for to meet the Douglas there
He rode right furiously.

25

But O how pale his lady look'd
Frae aff the castle wa',
When down before the Scottish spear,
She saw proud Percy fa'.

30

'Had we twa been upon the green,
And never an eye to see,
I wad hae had you, flesh and fell;
But your sword sall gae wi' me.'

35

'But gae ye up to Otterbourne,
And wait there dayis three;
And, if I come not ere three dayis end,
A fause knight ca' ye me.'

40

'The Otterbourne's a bonnie burn;
'Tis pleasant there to be;
But there is nought at Otterbourne
To feed my men and me.

'The deer rins wild on hill and dale,
The birds fly wild from tree to tree;
But there is neither bread nor kale
To feed my men and me.

45

'Yet I will stay at Otterbourne,
Where you shall welcome be; 50
And, if you come not at three dayis end,
A fause lord I'll ca' thee.'

'Thither will I come,' proud Percy said,
'By the might of Our Ladye!—
'There will I bide thee,' said the Douglas, 55
'My trowth I plight to thee.'

They lighted high on Otterbourne,
Upon the bent sae brown;
They lighted high on Otterbourne,
And threw their pallions down. 60

And he that had a bonnie boy,
Sent out his horse to grass;
And he that had not a bonnie boy,
His ain servant he was.

But up then spake a little page, 65
Before the peep of dawn—
'O waken ye, waken ye, my good lord,
For Percy's hard at hand.'

'Ye lie, ye lie, ye liar loud!
Sae loud I hear ye lie: 70
For Percy had not men yestreen,
To dight my men and me.

'But I hae dream'd a dreary dream,
Beyond the Isle of Skye;
I saw a dead man win a fight, 75
And I think that man was I.'

He belted on his good braid sword,
And to the field he ran;
But he forgot the helmet good,
That should have kept his brain. 80

When Percy wi' the Douglas met,
I wat he was fu' fain!
They swakked their swords, till sair they swat,
And the blood ran down like rain.

But Percy with his good braid sword, 85
That could so sharply wound,
Has wounded Douglas on the brow,
Till he fell to the ground.

Then he call'd on his little foot-page,
And said—'Run speedilie, 90
And fetch my ain dear sister's son,
Sir Hugh Montgomery.'

'My nephew good,' the Douglas said,
'What recks the death of ane!
Last night I dream'd a dreary dream, 95
And I ken the day's thy ain.

'My wound is deep; I fain would sleep;
Take thou the vanguard of the three,
And hide me by the braken bush,
That grows on yonder lilye lee. 100

'O bury me by the braken bush,
Beneath the blooming briar,
Let never living mortal ken
That ere a kindly Scot lies here.'

He lifted up that noble lord, 105
Wi' the saut tear in his e'e;
He hid him in the braken bush,
That his merrie men might not see.

The moon was clear, the day drew near,
The spears in flinders flew, 110
But many a gallant Englishman
Ere day the Scotsmen slew.

83. swakked swords] exchanged blows.

The Gordons good in English blood
They steep'd their hose and shoon;
The Lindsays flew like fire about, 115
Till all the fray was done.

The Percy and Montgomery met,
That either of other were fain;
That swappèd swords, and they twa swat,
And aye the blude ran down between. 120

'Yield thee, O yield thee, Percy!' he said,
'Or else I vow I'll lay thee low!'
'Whom to shall I yield,' said Earl Percy,
'Now that I see it must be so?'

'Thou shall not yield to lord nor loun, 125
Nor yet shalt thou yield to me;
But yield thee to the braken bush,
That grows upon yon lilye lee!'

'I will not yield to a braken bush,
Nor yet will I yield to a briar; 130
But I would yield to Earl Douglas,
Or Sir Hugh the Montgomery, if he were here.'

As soon as he knew it was Montgomery,
He stuck his sword's point in the gronde;
And the Montgomery was a courteous knight, 135
And quickly took him by the honde.

This deed was done at Otterbourne,
About the breaking of the day;
Earl Douglas was buried at the braken bush,
And the Percy led captive away. 140

ANONYMOUS (from Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Border*).

125. *loun*. A man of humble rank.

119. swappèd swords] exchanged blows.

PANEGYRIC ON ENGLAND

(1399)

Shakespeare makes John of Gaunt the mouthpiece of the discontent and unrest in England during the last years of the reign of Richard II.

Gaunt. Methinks I am a prophet new inspir'd,
And thus expiring do foretell of him:
His rash fierce blaze of riot cannot last,
For violent fires soon burn out themselves;
Small showers last long, but sudden storms are short;
He tires betimes that spurs too fast betimes; 6
With eager feeding food doth choke the feeder:
Light vanity, insatiate cormorant,
Consuming means, soon preys upon itself.
This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle, 10
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war,
This happy breed of men, this little world, 15
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall,
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands,
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings, 21
Fear'd by their breed and famous by their birth,
Renowned for their deeds as far from home,—
For Christian service and true chivalry,—
As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry 25
Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's Son:
This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land,
Dear for her reputation through the world,
Is now leas'd out,—I die pronouncing it,—

Like to a tenement, or pelting farm : 30
England, bound in with the triumphant sea,
Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege
Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame,
With inky blots, and rotten parchment bonds :
That England, that was wont to conquer others, 35
Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.
Ah! would the scandal vanish with my life,
How happy then were my ensuing death.

W. SHAKESPEARE (from *Richard II*).

29. *leas'd out*. A reference to Richard II's alliance with France, over whom in Gaunt's youth England had won such brilliant victories. The noble, always contemptuous of the lawyer, uses legal terms to express his disgust at the agreement between the two countries.

34. *inky blots*. Richard compelled men to seal bonds by which they promised to pay any amount he might choose to ask for.

DEPOSITION OF RICHARD II

(1399)

The chief cause which led to the deposition of Richard II was his unpopularity with the nobility on account of his desire to rule absolutely. The war party keenly resented the peace with France; and Bolingbroke, coming back ostensibly to claim his father's estate, found a strong party ready to force Richard to resign and put him on the throne.

Scene. Westminster Hall. The Lords Spiritual on the right side of the throne: the Lords Temporal on the left: the Commons below. Enter Richard, and officers bearing the crown, &c.

King Richard. Alack! why am I sent for to a king
Before I have shook off the regal thoughts
Wherewith I reign'd? I hardly yet have learn'd
To insinuate, flatter, bow, and bend my limbs:

30. pelting] paltry.

Give sorrow leave awhile to tutor me 5
To this submission. Yet I well remember
The favours of these men: were they not mine?
Did they not sometime cry, 'All hail!' to me?
So Judas did to Christ: but he, in twelve,
Found truth in all but one; I, in twelve thousand,
none. 10

God save the King! Will no man say, amen?
Am I both priest and clerk? well then, amen.
God save the King! although I be not he;
And yet, amen, if heaven do think him me.
To do what service am I sent for hither? 15

York. To do that office of thine own good will
Which tired majesty did make thee offer,
The resignation of thy state and crown
To Henry Bolingbroke.

King Richard. Give me the crown. Here, cousin,
seize the crown; 20

Here cousin,
On this side my hand and on that side thine.
Now is this golden crown like a deep well
That owes two buckets filling one another;
The emptier ever dancing in the air, 25
The other down, unseen and full of water:
That bucket down and full of tears am I,
Drinking my griefs, whilst you mount up on high.

Bolingbroke. I thought you had been willing to
resign.

King Richard. My crown, I am; but still my
griefs are mine. 30

You may my glories and my state depose,
But not my griefs; still am I king of those.

Bolingbroke. Part of your cares you give me with
your crown.

King Richard. Your cares set up do not pluck
my cares down.

My care is loss of care, by old care done; 35
Your care is gain of care, by new care won.

24. owes] has.

The cares I give I have, though given away;
They tend the crown, yet still with me they stay.

Bolingbroke. Are you contented to resign the crown?

King Richard. Ay, no; no, ay; for I must nothing be; 40

Therefore no no, for I resign to thee.

Now mark me how I will undo myself:

I give this heavy weight from off my head,

And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand,
The pride of kingly sway from out my heart; 45

With mine own tears I wash away my balm,

With mine own hands I give away my crown,

With mine own tongue deny my sacred state,

With mine own breath release all duteous rites:

All pomp and majesty I do forswear; 50

My manors, rents, revenues, I forego;

My acts, decrees, and statutes I deny:

God pardon all oaths that are broke to me!

God keep all vows unbroke are made to thee!

Make me, that nothing have, with nothing griev'd, 55

And thou with all pleas'd, that hast all achiev'd!

Long mayst thou live in Richard's seat to sit,

And soon lie Richard in an earthy pit!

God save King Henry, unking'd Richard says,

And send him many years of sunshine days! 60

W. SHAKESPEARE (from *Richard II.*)

46. balm] the sacred oil.

THE RED HARLAW

(1411)

The battle of the Harlaw settled whether the Gaelic or the Saxon race should be predominant in Scotland. The weak rule of the early Stuarts had led to such a state of anarchy in the country that the Highlanders thought Scotland would be an easy prey.

Donald, Lord of the Isles, enforced his claim to the earldom of Ross by ravaging the North with an army of Highlanders and Islesmen. He was opposed by Alexander Earl of Mar at the head of the Northern nobility and gentry of Saxon and Norman descent, for once united against the common peril. The battle was indecisive, but Donald had to retire and renounce his claims to Ross; so that all the advantages of the field were gained by the Saxons. [See Scott's *Antiquary*.]

NOW haud your tongue, baith wife and carle,
And listen, great and sma'
And I will sing of Glenallan's Earl
That fought on the red Harlaw.

The cronach's cried on Bennachie, 5
And doun the Don and a',
And hieland and lawland may mournfu' be
For the sair field of Harlaw.

They saddled a hundred milk-white steeds,
They hae bridled a hundred black, 10
With a chafron of steel on each horse's head,
And a good knight upon his back.

They hadna ridden a mile, a mile,
A mile, but barely ten,
When Donald came branking down the brae 15
Wi' twenty thousand men

5. cronach] coronach, death-wail.
15. branking] prancing.

11. chafron] frontlet.

Their tartans they were waving wide,
Their glaives were glancing clear,
The pibrochs rung frae side to side,
Would deafen ye to hear. 20

The great Earl in his stirrups stood,
That Highland host to see;
Now here a knight that's stout and good
. May prove a jeopardie:

'What would'st thou do, my squire so gay, 25
That rides beside my reyne,
Were ye Glenallan's Earl the day,
And I were Roland Cheyne?

'To turn the rein were sin and shame,
To fight were wond'rous peril; 30
What would ye do now, Roland Cheyne,
Were ye Glenallan's Earl?'

'Were I Glenallan's Earl this tide,
And ye were Roland Cheyne,
The spur should be in my horse's side, 35
And the bridle upon his mane.

'If they hae twenty thousand blades,
And we twice ten times ten,
Yet they hae but their tartan plaids,
And we are mail-clad men. 40

'My horse shall ride through ranks sae rude,
As through the moorland fern,—
Then ne'er let the gentle Norman blude
Grow cauld for Highland kerne.'

SIR W. SCOTT.

44. kerne] foot-soldier.

HENRY V IN FRANCE

(1415)

After reducing Harfleur, Henry V's purpose was to march on Paris. But he had underestimated the resistance of northern France, and with his army much weakened he was forced to fall back on Calais, and at Agincourt to fight his way through the French in order to secure his retreat.

CHORUS

O! FOR a Muse of fire, that would ascend
The brightest heaven of invention ;
A kingdom for a stage, princes to act
And monarchs to behold the swelling scene.
Then should the warlike Harry, like himself, 5
Assume the port of Mars; and at his heels,
Leash'd in like hounds, should famine, sword, and fire
Crouch for employment. But pardon, gentles all,
The flat unraised spirits that hath dar'd
On this unworthy scaffold to bring forth 10
So great an object: can this cockpit hold
The vasty fields of France? or may we cram
Within this wooden O the very casques
That did affright the air at Agincourt?
O, pardon! since a crooked figure may 15
Attest in little place a million;
And let us, ciphers to this great accompt,
On your imaginary forces work.
Suppose within the girdle of these walls
Are now confin'd two mighty monarchies, 20
Whose high upreared and abutting fronts
The perilous narrow ocean parts asunder:
Piece out our imperfections with your thoughts:

And teach them how to war. And you, good yeomen,
 Whose limbs were made in England, show us here
 The mettle of your pasture; let us swear
 That you are worth your breeding; which I doubt not;
 For there is none of you so mean and base
 That hath not noble lustre in your eyes. 30
 I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,
 Straining upon the start. The game's afoot:
 Follow your spirit; and, upon this charge
 Cry 'God for Harry! England and Saint George!'

CHORUS

Now entertain conjecture of a time
 When creeping murmur and the poring dark
 Fills the wide vessel of the universe.
 From camp to camp, through the foul womb of night,
 The hum of either army stilly sounds, 5
 That the fix'd sentinels almost receive
 The secret whispers of each other's watch:
 Fire answers fire, and through their paly flames
 Each battle sees the other's umber'd face:
 Steed threatens steed, in high and boastful neighs
 Piercing the night's dull ear; and from the tents 11
 The armourers, accomplishing the knights,
 With busy hammers closing rivets up,
 Give dreadful note of preparation.
 The country cocks do crow, the clocks do toll, 15
 And the third hour of drowsy morning name.
 Proud of their numbers, and secure in soul,
 The confident and over-lusty French
 Do the low-rated English play at dice;
 And chide the cripple tardy-gaited night 20
 Who, like a foul and ugly witch, doth limp
 So tediously away. The poor condemned English,
 Like sacrifices, by their watchful fires
 Sit patiently, and inly ruminate
 The morning's danger, and their gesture sad 25

Investing lank-lean cheeks and war-worn coats
 Presenteth them unto the gazing moon
 So many horrid ghosts. O! now, who will behold
 The royal captain of this ruin'd band
 Walking from watch to watch, from tent to tent, 30
 Let him cry 'Praise and glory on his head!'
 For forth he goes, and visits all his host,
 Bids them good morrow with a modest smile,
 And calls them brothers, friends, and countrymen.
 Upon his royal face there is no note 35
 How dread an army hath enrounded him;
 Nor doth he dedicate one jot of colour
 Unto the weary and all-watched night:
 But freshly looks and overbears attaint
 With cheerful semblance and sweet majesty; 40
 That every wretch, pining and pale before,
 Beholding him, plucks comfort from his looks.

39. *overbears attaint*. Effaces the marks of weariness.

AGINCOURT

Henry (to his soldiers before the battle). This day
 is call'd the feast of Crispian:
 He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
 Will stand a tip-toe when this day is nam'd,
 And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
 He that shall live this day, and see old age, 5
 Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
 And say, 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian.'
 Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars,
 And say, 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
 Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot, 10
 But he'll remember with advantages
 What feats he did that day. Then shall our names,
 Familiar in his mouth as household words,
 Harry the king, Bedford and Exeter,
 Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester, 15
 Be in their flowing cups freshly remember'd.

This story shall the good man teach his son;
 And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
 From this day to the ending of the world,
 But we in it shall be remembered; 20
 We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
 For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
 Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile
 This day shall gentle his condition:
 And gentlemen in England, now a-bed 25
 Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here,
 And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
 That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

W. SHAKESPEARE (from *Henry V*).

I. *feast of Crispian*. October 25th, in commemoration of
 Crispian and his brother Crispin, Christian martyrs in France,
 c. 300.

II. *advantages*. Additions, exaggerations.

AGINCOURT

(1415)

FAIR stood the wind for France
 When we our sails advance,
 Nor now to prove our chance
 Longer will tarry;
 But putting to the main, 5
 At Caux, the mouth of Seine,
 With all his martial train
 Landed King Harry.

And taking many a fort,
 Furnish'd in warlike sort, 10
 Marcheth tow'rds Agincourt
 In happy hour;

Skirmishing day by day
With those that stopp'd his way
Where the French gen'ral lay
With all his power. 15

Which, in his height of pride,
King Henry to deride,
His ransom to provide
Unto him sending; 20
Which he neglects the while
As from a nation vile,
Yet with an angry smile
Their fall portending.

And turning to his men, 25
Quoth our brave Henry then,
'Though they to one be ten
Be not amazèd:
Yet have we well begun;
Battles so bravely won 30
Have ever to the sun
By fame been raisèd.

'And for myself (quoth he)
This my full rest shall be:
England ne'er mourn for me 35
Nor more esteem me:
Victor I will remain
Or on this earth lie slain,
Never shall she sustain
Loss to redeem me. 40

'Poitiers and Cressy tell,
When most their pride did swell,
Under our swords they fell:
No less our skill is 45
Than when our grandsire great,
Claiming the regal seat,
By many a warlike feat
Lopp'd the French lilies.'

The Duke of York so dread
 The eager vaward led; 50
 With the main Henry sped
 Among his henchmen.
 Excester had the rear,
 A braver man not there; 6
 O Lord, how hot they were 55
 On the false Frenchmen!

They now to fight are gone,
 Armour on armour shone,
 Drum now to drum did groan,
 To hear was wonder; 60
 That with the cries they make
 The very earth did shake:
 Trumpet to trumpet spake,
 Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became, 65
 O noble Erpingham,
 Which didst the signal aim
 To our hid forces!
 When from a meadow by,
 Like a storm suddenly 70
 The English archery
 Struck the French horses.

With Spanish yew so strong,
 Arrows a cloth-yard long
 That like to serpents stung, 75
 Piercing the weather;
 None from his fellow starts,
 But playing manly parts,
 And like true English hearts
 Stuck close together. 80

50. vaward] vanguard.

When down their bows they threw,
 And forth their bilbos drew,
 And on the French they flew,
 Not one was tardy;
 Arms were from shoulders sent, 85
 Scalps to the teeth were rent,
 Down the French peasants went—
 Our men were hardy.

This while our noble king
 His broadsword brandishing, 90
 Down the French host did ding
 As to o'erwhelm it;
 And many a deep wound lent,
 His arms with blood besprent,
 And many a cruel dent 95
 Bruised his helmet.

Gloster, that duke so good,
 Next of the royal blood,
 For famous England stood
 With his brave brother; 100
 Clarence, in steel so bright,
 Though but a maiden knight,
 Yet in that furious fight
 Scarce such another.

Warwick in blood did wade, 105
 Oxford the foe invade,
 And cruel slaughter made
 Still as they ran up;
 Suffolk his axe did ply,
 Beaumont and Willoughby 110
 Bare them right doughtily,
 Ferrers and Fanhope.

82. bilbos] swords.

Upon Saint Crispin's Day
 Fought was this noble fray,
 Which fame did not delay 115
 To England to carry.
 O when shall English men
 With such acts fill a pen?
 Or England breed again
 Such a King Harry? 120

M. DRAYTON.

45. *grandsire*. Edward III, at Crécy, 1346.

A BALLAD OF ORLEANS

(1429)

A reference to the map will show that Orleans is the key to the country south of the Loire, and its importance was fully recognized by the English who tried for six months to take it. They were frustrated by Joan of Arc, who triumphantly led the French into the town, and in eight days forced the English to raise the siege and retire. The failure to take Orleans was the beginning of the end of English rule over France.

THE fray began at the middle-gate,
 Between the night and the day;
 Before the matin bell was rung
 The foe was far away.
 No knight in all the land of France 5
 Could gar that foe to flee,
 Till up there rose a young maiden,
 And drove them to the sea.
 Sixty forts around Orleans town,
 And sixty forts of stone! 10
 Sixty forts at our gates last night—
 To-day there is not one.

Talbot, Suffolk, and Pole are fled
Beyond the Loire, in fear—
Many a captain who would not drink 15
Hath drunken deeply there—
Many a captain is fallen and drowned,
And many a knight is dead,
And many lie in the misty dawn
While the forts are burning red. 20
Sixty forts around Orleans town, &c.

The blood ran off our spears all night
As the rain runs off the roofs—
God rest their souls that fell i' the fight
Among our horses' hoofs! 25
They came to rob us of our own
With sword and spear and lance,
They fell and clutched the stubborn earth,
And bit the dust of France! 29
Sixty forts around Orleans town, &c.

We fought across the moonless dark
Against their unseen hands—
A knight came out of Paradise
And fought among our bands.
Fight on, O maiden knight of God! 35
Fight on and never tire,
For lo! the misty break o' the day
Sees all their forts on fire!
Sixty forts around Orleans town, &c.

A. M. F. ROBINSON.

HENRY VI AND MARGARET OF ANJOU

(1460)

After the battle of Northampton, in 1460, the Duke of York claimed the throne by right of descent. The Parliament effected a compromise to which Henry VI agreed: he should reign for his lifetime, but York should succeed him. The Queen, Margaret of Anjou, naturally objected to the exclusion of her son from the throne, and raising the 'northern lords', defeated and killed the Duke of York at Wakefield.

King Henry. Be patient, gentle queen, and I will stay.

Queen Margaret. Who can be patient in such extremes?

Ah! wretched man; would I had died a maid,
And never seen thee, never borne thee son,
Seeing thou hast prov'd so unnatural a father. 5
Hath he deserv'd to lose his birthright thus?
Hadst thou but lov'd him half so well as I,
Or felt that pain which I did for him once,
Or nourish'd him as I did with my blood, 9
Thou wouldst have left thy dearest heart-blood there,
Rather than have made that savage duke thine heir,
And disinherited thine only son.

Prince. Father, you cannot disinherit me:
If you be king, why should not I succeed?

King Henry. Pardon me, Margaret; pardon me,
sweet son; 15
The Earl of Warwick, and the duke, enforc'd me.

Queen Margaret. Enforc'd thee! art thou King,
and wilt be forc'd?

I shame to hear thee speak. Ah! timorous wretch;
Thou hast undone thyself, thy son, and me;

And given unto the house of York such head 20
 As thou shalt reign but by their sufferance.
 To entail him and his heirs unto the crown,
 What is it but to make thy sepulchre,
 And creep into it far before thy time?
 Warwick is chancellor and the Lord of Calais; 25
 Stern Faulconbridge commands the narrow seas;
 The duke is made protector of the realm;
 And yet shalt thou be safe? such safety finds
 The trembling lamb environed with wolves.
 Had I been there, which am a silly woman, 30
 The soldiers should have toss'd me on their pikes
 Before I would have granted to that act;
 But thou preferr'st thy life before thine honour:
 And seeing thou dost, I here divorce myself,
 Both from thy table, Henry, and thy bed, 35
 Until that act of parliament be repeal'd
 Whereby my son is disinherited.
 The northern lords that have forsworn thy colours
 Will follow mine, if once they see them spread;
 And spread they shall be, to thy foul disgrace, 40
 And utter ruin of the house of York.
 Thus do I leave thee. Come, son, let's away;
 Our army is ready; come, we'll after them.

11. *that savage duke.* The Duke of York, killed at Wakefield.

16. *The Earl of Warwick.* The King-maker.

QUEEN MARGARET'S SPEECH

My lord of Suffolk, say, is this the guise,
 Is this the fashion in the court of England?
 Is this the government of Britain's isle,
 And this the royalty of Albion's king?
 What! shall King Henry be a pupil still, 5
 Under the surly Gloster's governance?
 Am I a Queen in title and in style,
 And must be made a subject to a duke?
 I tell thee, Poole, when in the city Tours

Thou ran'st a tilt in honour of my love, 10
 And stol'st away the ladies' hearts of France,
 I thought King Henry had resembled thee,
 In courage, courtship, and proportion;
 But all his mind is bent to holiness,
 To number Ave-Maries on his beads: 15
 His champions are the prophets and apostles,
 His weapons, holy saws of sacred writ;
 His study is his tilt-yard, and his loves
 Are brazen images of canoniz'd saints.
 I would, the college of the cardinals 20
 Would choose him pope, and carry him to Rome,
 And set the triple crown upon his head:
 That were a state fit for his holiness.

W. SHAKESPEARE (from *Henry VI*).

22. *the triple crown.* The Pope's tiara, which consists of three crowns surmounted by a cross. For ceremonies entirely spiritual the Pope wears a mitre.

FLODDEN

(1513)

Since Bannockburn, Scotland had been the usual ally of France in her quarrel with England. In 1513 James IV, although married to Henry VIII's sister, invaded England at the request of the Queen of France. The Earl of Surrey, by a clever march northwards, crossed the river Till, so as to cut off James from Scotland, and in the battle which followed the Scottish army was utterly defeated. Their centre, against overwhelming odds, fought bravely even after the death of James.

AND why stands Scotland idly now,
 Dark Flodden! on thy airy brow,
 Since England gains the pass the while,
 And struggles through the deep defile?

What checks the fiery soul of James? 5
 Why sits that champion of the dames
 Inactive on his steed,
 And sees, between him and his land,
 Between him and Tweed's southern strand,
 His host Lord Surrey lead? 10
 What vails the vain knight-errant's brand?
 O, Douglas, for thy leading wand!
 Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!
 O for one hour of Wallace wight,
 Or well-skill'd Bruce, to rule the fight, 15
 And cry 'Saint Andrew and our right!'

Another sight had seen that morn,
 From Fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
 And Flodden had been Bannockbourne!
 The precious hour has pass'd in vain, 20
 And England's host has gain'd the plain;
 Wheeling their march, and circling still,
 Around the base of Flodden hill.

'And see ascending squadrons come
 Between Tweed's river and the hill, 25
 Foot, horse, and cannon: hap what hap,
 My basnet to a prentice cap,
 Lord Surrey's o'er the Till!
 Yet more! yet more!—how far array'd
 They file from out the hawthorn shade, 30
 And sweep so gallant by!
 With all their banners bravely spread,
 And all their armour flashing high,
 Saint George might waken from the dead,
 To see fair England's standards fly.'— 35
 'But see! look up—on Flodden bent
 The Scottish foe has fired his tent.'

And sudden, as he spoke,
 From the sharp ridges of the hill,
 All downward to the banks of Till, 40
 Was wreath'd in sable smoke.

27. basnet] light helmet.

Volum'd and fast, and rolling far,
 The cloud envelop'd Scotland's war,
 As down the hill they broke;
 Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone, 45
 Announc'd their march; their tread alone,
 At times one warning trumpet blown,
 At times a stifled hum,
 Told England, from his mountain-throne
 King James did rushing come. 50
 Scarce could they hear, or see their foes;
 Until at weapon-point they close.
 They close, in clouds of smoke and dust,
 With sword-sway, and with lance's thrust;
 And such a yell was there, 55
 Of sudden and portentous birth,
 As if men fought upon the earth,
 And fiends in upper air.
 At length the freshening western blast
 Aside the shroud of battle cast; 60
 And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
 Above the brightening cloud appears;
 And in the smoke the pennons flew,
 As in the storm the white sea-mew.
 Then mark'd they, dashing broad and far, 65
 The broken billows of the war,
 And plum'd crests of chieftains brave,
 Floating like foam upon the wave;
 But nought distinct they see:
 Wide rag'd the battle on the plain; 70
 Spears shook, and falchions flash'd amain;
 Fell England's arrow-flight like rain;
 Crests rose, and stoop'd, and rose again,
 Wild and disorderly.
 Amid the scene of tumult, high 75
 They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly:
 And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
 And Edmund Howard's lion bright,
 Still bear them bravely in the fight:

71. falchions] swords.

Although against them come, 80
 Of gallant Gordons many a one,
 And many a stubborn Badenoch-man,
 And many a rugged Border clan,
 With Huntly, and with Home.
 Far on the left, unseen the while, 85
 Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle;
 Though there the western mountaineer
 Rush'd with bare bosom on the spear,
 And flung the feeble targe aside,
 And with both hands the broadsword plied. 90
 'Twas vain:—But Fortune, on the right,
 With fickle smile, cheer'd Scotland's fight.
 Then fell that spotless banner white,
 The Howard's lion fell;
 Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew 95
 With wavering flight, while fiercer grew
 Around the battle-yell.
 The Border slogan rent the sky!
 A Home! a Gordon! was the cry:
 Loud were the clanging blows; 100
 Advanc'd, forc'd back, now low, now high,
 The pennon sunk and rose;
 As bends the bark's mast in the gale,
 When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,
 It waver'd 'mid the foes. 105
 But as they left the dark'ning heath,
 More desperate grew the strife of death.
 The English shafts in volleys hail'd,
 In headlong charge their horse assail'd;
 Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep 110
 To break the Scottish circle deep,
 That fought around their King.
 But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
 Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
 Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow, 115
 Unbroken was the ring;
 The stubborn spear-men still made good
 Their dark impenetrable wood,

Each stepping where his comrade stood,
 The instant that he fell. 120
 No thought was there of dastard flight;
 Link'd in the serried phalanx tight,
 Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
 As fearlessly and well;
 Till utter darkness closed her wing 125
 O'er their thin host and wounded King.
 Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
 Led back from strife his shatter'd bands;
 And from the charge they drew,
 As mountain-waves, from wasted lands, 130
 Sweep back to ocean blue.
 Then did their loss his foemen know;
 Their King, their Lords, their mightiest low,
 They melted from the field as snow,
 When streams are swoln and south winds blow,
 Dissolves in silent dew. 136
 Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless splash,
 While many a broken band,
 Disorder'd, through her currents dash,
 To gain the Scottish land; 140
 To town and tower, to down and dale,
 To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
 And raise the universal wail.
 Tradition, legend, tune, and song,
 Shall many an age that wail prolong: 145
 Still from the sire the son shall hear
 Of the stern strife, and carnage drear,
 Of Flodden's fatal field,
 Where shiver'd was fair Scotland's spear,
 And broken was her shield! 150

SIR W. SCOTT (from *Marmion*).

THE FLOWERS OF THE FOREST

(1513)

[See Introduction to 'Flodden'.]

I'VE heard them liltin' at our ewe-milking,
 Lasses a' liltin' before dawn o' day;
 But now they are moaning on ilka green loaning—
 The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At bughts, in the morning, nae blythe lads are
 scorning, 5
 Lasses are lonely and dowie and wae;
 Nae daffing, nae gabbing, but sighing and sabbing,
 Ilk ane lifts her leglin and hies her away.

In har'st, at the shearing, nae youths now are jeering,
 Bandsters are lyart, and runkled, and gray: 10
 At fair or at preaching, nae wooing, nae fleeching—
 The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

Dool and wae for the order sent our lads to the
 Border!
 The English, for ance, by guile wan the day;
 The Flowers of the Forest, that fought aye the foremost,
 The prime of our land, lie cauld in the clay. 16

We'll hear nae mair liltin' at our ewe-milking;
 Women and bairns are heartless and wae;
 Sighing and moaning on ilka green loaning—
 The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away. 20

J. ELLIOT.

4. *the Forest.* Ettrick Forest in the south of Scotland.

- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. liltin'] singing. | 3. ilka] every. | loanin'] path. |
| 4. wede] faded. | 5. bughts] folds. | 6. dowie] sad. |
| 7. daffin'] jesting. | gabbin'] chatter. | 8. leglin] milking- |
| pail. | 10. Bandsters] sheaf-binders. | lyart] withered. |
| runkled] wrinkled. | 11. fleechin'] entreaty. | 13. dool] |
| grief. | wae] woe. | |

THE FALL OF WOLSEY

(1530)

Wolsey's fall was the penalty exacted by Henry VIII for the failure of the negotiations with the Pope to obtain leave for the divorce of Catherine of Aragon. Wolsey had done his best to procure this, though he had favoured a remarriage with a French princess—to strengthen the alliance with France—rather than with Anne Boleyn. But he was hated both by the nobles and the people, and Henry was glad to gain a fresh spell of popularity by throwing him over. He was dismissed from the chancellorship, and his property seized. He still remained Archbishop of York, but when he began to intrigue for a return to power, he was arrested on a charge of treason, and on his journey to London fell ill and died at Leicester.

The following scene represents his reception of the news of his dismissal as Chancellor. Cromwell, whom he addresses, was in his employment; he afterwards passed into the service of the King, and carried through the dissolution of the monasteries, but himself fell from favour in 1540 on the failure of his German policy, and was executed on an act of attainder.

Wolsey. Farewell! a long farewell, to all my greatness!

This is the state of man; to-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hopes; to-morrow blossoms,
And bears his blushing honours thick upon him;
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost; 5
And, when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
His greatness is a-ripening, nips his root,
And then he falls, as I do. I have ventur'd,
Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders, 10
This many summers in a sea of glory,
But far beyond my depth: my high-blown pride
At length broke under me, and now has left me,
Weary and old with service, to the mercy
Of a rude stream, that must for ever hide me.
Vain pomp and glory of this world, I hate ye: 15
I feel my heart new open'd. O! how wretched

Is that poor man that hangs on princes' favours!
There is, betwixt that smile we would aspire to,
That sweet aspect of princes, and their ruin,
More pangs and fears than wars or women have:
And when he falls, he falls like Lucifer, 21
Never to hope again.

Cromwell, I did not think to shed a tear
In all my miseries; but thou hast forc'd me,
Out of thy honest truth, to play the woman. 25
Let's dry our eyes: and thus far hear me, Cromwell;
And, when I am forgotten, as I shall be,
And sleep in dull cold marble, where no mention
Of me more must be heard of, say, I taught thee,
Say, Wolsey, that once trod the ways of glory, 30
And sounded all the depths and shoals of honour,
Found thee a way, out of his wrack, to rise in;
A sure and safe one, though thy master miss'd it.
Mark but my fall, and that that ruin'd me.
Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition: 35
By that sin fell the angels; how can man then,
The image of his Maker, hope to win by 't?
Love thyself last: cherish those hearts that hate thee;
Corruption wins not more than honesty.
Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace, 40
To silence envious tongues: be just, and fear not.
Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,
Thy God's, and truth's; then if thou fall'st, O
Cromwell!

Thou fall'st a blessed martyr. Serve the King;
And,—prithee, lead me in: 45
There take an inventory of all I have,
To the last penny; 'tis the King's: my robe
And my integrity to heaven is all
I dare now call mine own. O Cromwell, Cromwell!
Had I but serv'd my God with half the zeal 50
I serv'd my King, he would not in mine age
Have left me naked to mine enemies.

(?) W. SHAKESPEARE (from *Henry VIII.*)

WOLSEY

(1530)

IN full-blown dignity, see Wolsey stand,
 Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand:
 To him the church, the realm, their pow'rs consign,
 Thro' him the rays of regal bounty shine,
 Turn'd by his nod the stream of honour flows, 5
 His smile alone security bestows.
 Still to new heights his restless wishes tow'r,
 Claim leads to claim, and pow'r advances pow'r:
 Till conquest unresisted ceas'd to please,
 And rights submitted left him none to seize. 10
 At length his sov'reign frowns—the train of state
 Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate.
 Where'er he turns, he meets a stranger's eye,
 His suppliants scorn him, and his followers fly:
 Now drops at once the pride of awful state, 15
 The golden canopy, the glitt'ring plate,
 The regal palace, the luxurious board,
 The liv'ried army, and the menial lord.
 With age, with cares, with maladies oppress'd,
 He seeks the refuge of monastic rest; 20
 Grief aids disease, remember'd folly stings,
 And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings.
 Speak thou whose thoughts at humble peace repine,
 Shall Wolsey's wealth, with Wolsey's end, be thine?
 Or liv'st thou now, with safer pride content, 25
 The wisest justice on the banks of Trent?
 For why did Wolsey, near the steeps of fate,
 On weak foundations raise th' enormous weight?
 Why, but to sink beneath misfortune's blow,
 With louder ruin to the gulfs below? 30
 S. JOHNSON (from *The Vanity of Human Wishes*).

26. *The wisest justice, &c.*, i. e. Justice of the Peace; possibly Dr. Taylor, an early friend of Johnson's, and Squire of Ashbourne.

CRANMER'S PROPHECY

(1533)

Elizabeth had recently died when this play was written.

(*The baby ELIZABETH is carried in by her God-mother, and CRANMER blesses the KING and QUEEN.*)

King Henry. Thank you, good Lord Archbishop :
What is her name?

Cranmer. Elizabeth.

King Henry.

Stand up, Lord.

[*The KING kisses the child.*]

With this kiss take my blessing; God protect thee!
Into whose hand I give thy life.

Cranmer.

Amen.

King Henry. My noble gossips, ye have been
too prodigal: 5

I thank ye heartily: so shall this lady
When she has so much English.

Cranmer.

Let me speak, sir,

For heaven now bids me; and the words I utter
Let none think flattery, for they'll find 'em truth.
This royal infant,—heaven still move about her!—
Though in her cradle, yet now promises 11
Upon this land a thousand thousand blessings,
Which time shall bring to ripeness: she shall be—
But few now living can behold that goodness—
A pattern to all princes living with her, 15
And all that shall succeed: Saba was never

5. gossips] godparents.

10. still] always.

16. Saba] Queen of Sheba.

More covetous of wisdom and fair virtue
Than this pure soul shall be: all princely graces,
That mould up such a mighty piece as this is,
With all the virtues that attend the good, 20
Shall still be doubled on her; truth shall nurse her;
Holy and heavenly thoughts still counsel her;
She shall be lov'd and fear'd; her own shall bless her;
Her foes shake like a field of beaten corn,
And hang their heads with sorrow; good grows with
her. 25

In her days every man shall eat in safety
Under his own vine what he plants; and sing
The merry songs of peace to all his neighbours.
God shall be truly known; and those about her
From her shall read the perfect ways of honour, 30
And by those claim their greatness, not by blood.

King Henry. Thou speakest wonders.

Cranmer. She shall be, to the happiness of
England,

An aged princess; many days shall see her,
And yet no day without a deed to crown it. 35
Would I had known no more! but she must die,
She must, the saints must have her, yet a virgin;
A most unspotted lily shall she pass
To the ground, and all the world shall mourn her.

(?) W. SHAKESPEARE (from *Henry VIII*).

SIR HUMPHREY GILBERT

(1583)

Sir Humphrey Gilbert, statesman, courtier, soldier, and explorer, set out in 1583 to found the colony of Newfoundland, but the attempt was a failure. He sailed back to England in *The Squirrel* of ten tons burden. On the afternoon of a stormy September day he was seen by the sailors in the companion ship, *The Golden Hind*, sitting in the bow with a book in his hand. When they approached within hearing, he cried out: 'We are as near to Heaven by sea as by land.' On the same night, the light of *The Squirrel* suddenly disappeared.

[See Sir Humphrey Gilbert in Froude's *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, vol. i; *England's Forgotten Worthies*; and Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* chapter xiii—'How *The Golden Hind* came home again.']

SOUTHWARD with fleet of ice
Sailed the corsair Death;
Wild and fast blew the blast,
And the east-wind was his breath.

His lordly ships of ice 5
Glisten in the sun;
On each side, like pennons wide,
Flashing crystal streamlets run.

His sails of white sea-mist 10
Dripped with silver rain;
But where he passed there were cast
Leaden shadows o'er the main.

Eastward from Campobello
Sir Humphrey Gilbert sailed;
Three days or more seaward he bore, 15
Then, alas! the land-wind failed.

Alas! the land-wind failed;
And ice-cold grew the night;
And never more, on sea or shore,
Should Sir Humphrey see the light. 20

He sat upon the deck,
The Book was in his hand;
'Do not fear! Heaven is as near,'
He said, 'by water as by land!'

In the first watch of the night, 25
Without a signal's sound,
Out of the sea, mysteriously,
The fleet of Death rose all around.

The moon and the evening star
Were hanging in the shrouds; 30
Every mast, as it passed,
Seemed to rake the passing clouds.

They grappled with their prize,
At midnight black and cold!
As of a rock was the shock; 35
Heavily the ground-swell rolled.

Southward through day and dark
They drift in close embrace,
With mist and rain o'er the open main;
Yet there seems no change of place. 40

Southward, for ever southward,
They drift through dark and day;
And like a dream, in the Gulf-Stream
Sinking, vanish all away.

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

13. *Campobello*. An island in the Bay of Fundy.

22. *The Book* was More's *Utopia*, but Longfellow apparently means the Bible.

THE LAST SCENE AT FOTHERINGAY

(1587)

When in 1568 Mary crossed the Border to sue for Elizabeth's protection against the Scottish lords, she virtually became a prisoner for nineteen years. During all this time she was the centre of the plots against Elizabeth, and a source of perplexity and anxiety to the English Queen and her ministers. At last she was found guilty of complicity in Babington's conspiracy to kill Elizabeth, who reluctantly consented to the English Parliament's petition that she should be executed. How far Mary was really guilty will never be known; historians take sides on the matter. All, however, are agreed on the personal charm she shed on those around her; even dour John Knox felt it.

Enter MARY STUART, led by two gentlemen and preceded by the Sheriff; MARY BEATON, BARBARA MOWBRAY, and other ladies behind, who remain in the doorway.

Melville (kneeling to Mary). Woe am I,
Madam, that I must bear to Scotland back
Such tidings watered with such tears as these.

Mary Stuart. Weep not, good Melville; rather
should your heart
Rejoice that here an end is come at last 5
Of Mary Stuart's long sorrows: for be sure
That all this world is only vanity.
And this record I pray you make of me,
That a true woman to my faith I die,
And true to Scotland and to France: but God 10
Forgive them that have long desired mine end
And with false tongues have thirsted for my blood
As the hart thirsteth for the water-brooks.

Stirs of her sovereign feature: like a bride 50
Brought home she mounts the scaffold; and her
eyes

Sweep regal round the cirque beneath, and rest,
Subsiding with a smile. She sits, and they,
The doomsmen earls, beside her; at her left
The sheriff, and the clerk at hand on high, 55
To read the warrant.

Now speaks Lord Shrewsbury but a word or twain,
And brieflier yet she answers, and stands up
As though to kneel, and pray.

Mary Beaton. I too have prayed—
God hear at last her prayers not less than mine, 61
Which failed not, sure, of hearing.

Barbara. Now draws nigh
That heretic priest, and bows himself, and thrice
Strives, as a man that sleeps in pain, to speak, 65
Stammering: she waves him by, as one whose
prayers

She knows may nought avail her: now she kneels,
And the earls rebuke her, and she answers not,
Kneeling. O Christ, whose likeness there engraved
She strikes against her bosom, hear her! Now 70
That priest lifts up his voice against her prayer,
Praying: and a voice all round goes up with his:
But hers is lift up higher than climbs their cry,
In the great psalms of penitence: and now
She prays aloud in English; for the Pope 75
Our father, and his church; and for her son,
And for the queen her murderess; and that God
May turn from England yet his wrath away;
And so forgives her enemies; and implores
High intercession of the Saints with Christ, 80
Whom crucified she kisses on his cross,
And crossing now her breast—Ah, heard you not?

54. doomsmen] her judges.

*Even as thine arms were spread upon the cross,
So make thy grace, O Jesus, wide for me,
Receive me to thy mercy so, and so* 85
Forgive my sins.

Mary Beaton. So be it, if so God please.
Is she not risen up yet?

Barbara. Yea, but mine eyes
Darken: because those deadly twain close masked
Draw nigh as men that crave forgiveness, which 91
Gently she grants: *for now*, she said, *I hope*
You shall end all my troubles. Now meseems
They would put hand upon her as to help,
And disarray her raiment: but she smiles— 95
Heard you not that? can you nor hear nor speak,
Poor heart, for pain? *Truly*, she said, *my lords,*
I never had such chamber-grooms before
As these to wait on me.

Mary Beaton. An end, an end. 100

Barbara. Now come those twain upon the
scaffold up

Whom she preferred before us: and she lays
Her crucifix down, which now the headsman takes
Into his cursed hand, but being rebuked
Puts back for shame that sacred spoil of hers. 105
And now they lift her veil up from her head
Softly, and softly draw the black robe off,
And all in red as of a funeral flame
She stands up statelier yet before them, tall
And clothed as if with sunset: and she takes 110
From Elspeth's hand the crimson sleeves, and draws
Their covering on her arms: and now those twain
Burst out aloud in weeping: and she speaks—
Weep not; I promised for you. Now she kneels;
And Jane binds round a kerchief on her eyes: 115
And smiling last her heavenliest smile on earth,
She waves a blind hand toward them, with *Farewell,*
Farewell, to meet again: and they come down
And leave her praying aloud, *In thee, O Lord,*
I put my trust: and now that psalm being through

She lays between the block and her soft neck 121
Her long white peerless hands up tenderly,
Which now the headsman draws again away,
But softly too: now stir her lips again—
Into thine hands, O Lord, into thine hands, 125
Lord, I commend my spirit: and now—but now,
Look you, not I, the last upon her.

Mary Beaton.

Ha!

He strikes awry: she stirs not. Nay, but now
He strikes aright, and ends it. 130

Barbara.

Hark, a cry.

Voice below. So perish all found enemies of the
Queen!

Another voice. Amen.

Mary Beaton. I heard that very cry go up
Far off long since to God, who answers here. 135

A. C. SWINBURNE (from *Mary Stuart*).

1. *Melville.* Gentleman of the Bed-chamber to Mary; he
was afterwards employed by James VI, and wrote some interest-
ing memoirs of the times.

64. *that heretic priest.* Dr. Fletcher, afterwards Bishop of
London.

THE ARMADA

(1588)

ATTEND, all ye who list to hear our noble England's
praise;
I tell of the thrice-famous deeds she wrought in ancient
days,
When that great fleet invincible against her bore in
vain
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of
Spain.

It was about the lovely close of a warm summer
day,
There came a gallant merchant-ship full sail to ⁵
Plymouth Bay;
Her crew had seen Castile's black fleet, beyond
Aurigny's Isle,
At earliest twilight, on the waves lie heaving many
a mile.
At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial
grace:
And the tall Pinta, till the noon, had held her close
in chase.
Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along ¹⁰
the wall;
The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgumbe's
lofty hall;
Many a light fishing bark put out to pry along the
coast,
And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland
many a post.

7. Aurigny] Alderney.

With his white hair unbonneted, the stout old sheriff
comes; ¹⁵
Behind him march the halberdiers; before him sound
the drums;
His yeomen round the market cross make clear an
ample space;
For there, behoves him to set up the standard of
Her Grace.

And haughtily the trumpets peal and gaily dance
the bells,
As slow upon the labouring wind the royal blazon
swells. ²⁰
Look how the Lion of the sea lifts up his ancient
crown,
And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies
down.
So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that famed
Picard field,
Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Caesar's
eagle shield.
So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he turned
to bay, ²⁵
And crushed and torn beneath his claws the princely
hunters lay.

Ho! strike the flagstaff deep, Sir Knight: ho!
scatter flowers, fair maids:
Ho! gunners, fire a loud salute: ho! gallants, draw
your blades:
Thou sun, shine on her joyously; ye breezes, waft
her wide;
Our glorious SEMPER EADEM, the banner of our
pride. ³⁰
The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's
massy fold;
The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty
scroll of gold;

Night sank upon the dusky beach, and on the
purple sea,
Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er
again shall be.
From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to
Milford Bay,
That time of slumber was as bright and busy as the³⁵
day;
For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-
flame spread,
High on St. Michael's Mount it shone; it shone on
Beachy Head.
Far on the deep the Spaniards saw, along each
southern shire,
Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling
points of fire.
The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering⁴⁰
waves:
The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's
sunless caves:
O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the
fiery herald flew:
He roused the shepherds of Stonehenge, the rangers
of Beaulieu.

Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out
from Bristol town,
And ere the day three hundred horse had met on⁴⁵
Clifton Down;
The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into the
night,
And saw o'erhanging Richmond Hill the streak of
blood-red light;
Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the death-like
silence broke,
And with one start and with one cry, the royal
city woke.
At once on all her stately gates arose the answering⁵⁰
fires;

At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling
 spires;
 From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the
 voice of fear;
 And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a
 louder cheer;
 And from the furthest wards was heard the rush of
 hurrying feet,
 And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed down ⁵⁵
 each roaring street;
 And broader still became the blaze, and louder still
 the din,
 As fast from every village round the horse came
 spurring in:
 And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the
 warlike errand went,
 And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant squires
 of Kent. ⁶⁰
 Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills flew those
 bright couriers forth;
 High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they
 started for the north;
 And on, and on, without a pause, untired they
 bounded still:
 All night from tower to tower they sprang: they
 sprang from hill to hill:
 Till the proud Peak unfurled the flag o'er Darwin's
 rocky dales, ⁶⁵
 Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy
 hills of Wales.
 Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's
 lonely height,
 Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's
 crest of light,
 Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's
 stately fane,
 And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the
 boundless plain; ⁷⁰
 Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln sent,

And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale
 of Trent;
 Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt's
 embattled pile,
 And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers
 of Carlisle.

LORD MACAULAY.

16. *halberdiers*. A halberd was a weapon shaped so as to serve both as axe and spear.

22. *The gay lilies*. The flag of France.

23. *Picard field*. Crécy (1346) in Picardy.

24. *Bohemia's plume*. (Cf. Crécy, p. 63 (I), l. 45.) The King of Bohemia's crest was three feathers (afterwards adopted by the Prince of Wales).

Genoa's bow. See note to Crécy, p. 63 (I), l. 43.

Caesar's eagle shield. Charles, the son of the King of Bohemia, was also King of the Romans. The princes who bore this title, might—as did Charlemagne and his successors—regard themselves as heirs to the Roman Emperors, all of whom used to adopt the name of Caesar. The eagle was the military symbol of Rome.

30. SEMPER EADEM] 'Always the same'—Elizabeth's motto.

41. *Tamar's*. Devon's. Tamar is a river in Devonshire.

42. *Mendip's sunless caves*. The mines in Somersetshire.

43. *Longleat*. In Wiltshire.

43-4. *Cranbourne, Beaulieu*. Near the New Forest.

65. *Darwin*. The Derwent in Derbyshire.

68. *the Wrekin*. A hill in Shropshire.

71. *Belvoir*. The Duke of Rutland's house on the borders of Lincolnshire.

73. *Gaunt's embattled pile*. Lancaster Castle.

THE END OF THE ARMADA

(1588)

SOUTHWARD to Calais, appalled
And astonished, the vast fleet veers;
And the skies are shrouded and palled,
But the moonless midnight hears
And sees how swift on them drive and drift strange
flames that the darkness fears.
They fly through the night from shoreward,
Heart-stricken till morning break,
And ever to scourge them forward
Drives down on them England's Drake,
And hurls them in as they hurtle and spin and
stagger, with storm to wake. 10

.

Fierce noon beats hard on the battle; the galleons
that loom to the lee
Bow down, heel over, uplifting their shelterless hulls
from the sea;
From scuppers aspiert with blood, from guns dis-
mounted and dumb,
The signs of the doom they looked for, the loud
mute witnesses come.
They press with sunset to seaward for comfort:
and shall not they find it there? 15
O servants of God most high, shall his winds not
pass you by, and his waves not spare?
The wings of the south-west wind are widened;
the breath of his fervent lips,
More keen than a sword's edge, fiercer than fire, falls
full on the plunging ships.
The pilot is he of their northward flight, their stay
and their steersman he;

A helmsman clothed with the tempest, and girdled
 with strength to constrain the sea. ²⁰
 And the host of them trembles and quails, caught
 fast in his hand as a bird in the toils;
 For the wrath and the joy that fulfil him are mightier
 than man's, whom he slays and spoils.
 And vainly, with heart divided in sunder, and labour
 of wavering will,
 The lord of their host takes counsel with hope if
 haply their star shine still,
 If haply some light be left them of chance to renew
 and redeem the fray; ²⁵
 But the will of the black south-wester is lord of the
 councils of war to-day.
 One only spirit it quells not, a splendour undarkened
 of chance or time;
 Be the praise of his foes with Oquendo for ever,
 a name as a star sublime.
 But hear what aid in a hero's heart, what help in
 his hand may be?
 For ever the dark wind whitens and blackens the
 hollows and heights of the sea, ³⁰
 And galley by galley, divided and desolate, founders;
 and none takes heed,
 Nor foe nor friend, if they perish; forlorn, cast off
 in their uttermost need,
 They sink in the whelm of the waters, as pebbles by
 children from shoreward hurled,
 In the North Sea's waters that end not, nor know
 they a bourn but the bourn of the world.
 Past many a secure unavailable harbour, and many
 a loud stream's mouth, ³⁵
 Past Humber and Tees and Tyne and Tweed, they
 fly, scourged on from the south,
 For the wind, of its godlike mercy, relents not,
 and hounds them ahead to the north,
 With English hunters at heel, till now is the herd
 of them past the Forth,

All huddled and hurtled seaward; and now need
none wage war upon these,
Nor huntsmen follow the quarry whose fall is the
pastime sought of the seas. 40

A. C. SWINBURNE.

13. *scuppers*. Holes in the bulwarks to let out water from the deck.

28. *Oquendo*. A brave young commander in the Spanish fleet. When the ships were drifting into shallow water off Calais, and all was confusion and panic, Sidonia sent for him to advise: 'Señor Oquendo,' he exclaimed, 'what are we to do? We are lost!' Oquendo gave a brave man's answer: 'Let Diego Florez talk of being lost; let your Excellency bid me order up the cartridges.'

DRAKE'S DRUM

(1596)

Francis Drake was first among the English to wrest from Spain the monopoly of the New World. In 1572 he sacked Nombre de Dios, on the isthmus of Panama, which he called 'the mouth of the Treasury of the World'. In 1577 he sailed on his voyage round the world in *The Pelican*, swooped down upon Chili and Peru, and took a great galleon with spoil of over half a million pounds in value. When in 1587 the Armada was nearly ready, Drake delayed it for a year by 'singeing the King of Spain's beard'—running into Cadiz and burning the store-ships there. In 1588 he was second in command of the fleet against the Armada.

[For a modern account of Drake see that by Mr. Julian Corbet ('English Men of Action' Series.) A contemporary account of his voyage may be read in Hakluyt.]

DRAKE he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile
away,

(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)

Slung between the round shot in Nombre Dios Bay,

An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.

Yarnder lumes the Island, yarnder lie the ships, 5

Wi' sailor lads a-dancin' heel-an'-toe,

An' the shore-lights flashin', an' the night-tide dashin',

He sees et arl so plainly as he saw et long ago.

Drake he was a Devon man, an' ruled the Devon seas,
 (Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?) ¹⁰
 Rovin' tho' his death fell, he went wi' heart at ease,
 An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
 'Take my drum to England, hang et by the shore,
 Strike et when your powder's runnin' low;
 If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,
 An' drum them up the Channel as we drummed
 them long ago.' ¹⁶

Drake he's in his hammock till the great Armadas
 come,
 (Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
 Slung atween the round shot, listenin' for the drum,
 An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe. ²⁰
 Call him on the deep sea, call him up the Sound,
 Call him when ye sail to meet the foe;
 Where the old trade's plyin' an' the old flag flyin'
 They shall find him ware an' wakin', as they found
 him long ago!

H. NEWBOLT.

^{13.} *my drum.* Drake's drum is still preserved at Buckland Abbey.

TO THE VIRGINIAN VOYAGE

(1607)

This poem was written about 1607, when the first permanent colony was founded at Jamestown.

YOU brave heroic minds
 Worthy your country's name,
 That honour still pursue;
 Go and subdue!
 Whilst loitering hinds
 Lurk here at home with shame.

5

Britons, you stay too long:
 • Quickly aboard bestow you,
 And with a merry gale
 Swell your stretch'd sail 10
 With vows as strong
 As the winds that blow you.

Your course securely steer,
 West and by south forth keep!
 Rocks, lee-shores, nor shoals 15
 When Eolus scowls
 You need not fear;
 So absolute the deep.

And cheerfully at sea
 Success you still entice 20
 To get the pearl and gold,
 And ours to hold
Virginia,
 Earth's only paradise.

Where nature hath in store 25
 Fowl, venison, and fish,
 And the fruitfull'st soil
 Without your toil
 Three harvests more,
 All greater than your wish. 30

And the ambitious vine
 Crowns with his purple mass
 The cedar reaching high
 To kiss the sky,
 The cypress, pine, 35
 And useful sassafras.

To whom the Golden Age
 Still nature's laws doth give,
 No other cares attend,
 But them to defend 40
 From winter's rage,
 That long there doth not live.

When as the luscious smell
 Of that delicious land
 Above the seas that flows
 The clear wind throws, 45
 Your hearts to swell
 Approaching the dear strand;

 In kenning of the shore
 (Thanks to God first given) 50
 O you the happiest men,
 Be frolic then!
 Let cannons roar,
 Frighting the wide heaven.

 And in regions far, 55
 Such heroes bring ye forth
 As those from whom we came;
 And plant our name
 Under that star
 Not known unto our North. 60

 And as there plenty grows
 Of laurel everywhere—
 Apollo's sacred tree—
 You it may see
 A poet's brows 65
 To crown, that may sing there.

 The *Voyages* attend,
 Industrious Hakluyt,
 Whose reading shall inflame
 Men to seek fame, 70
 And much commend
 To after times thy wit.

M. DRAYTON.

16. *Eolus*. The god of the winds.
 36. *sassafras*. A medicinal plant of the laurel species, found
 in North America.
 59. *that star*. As one goes south, new stars become visible,

but the latitude of Virginia is not sufficiently different from our own for any star, which is invisible to us, to be at all high above the horizon.

63. *sacred tree*. The laurel, sacred to Apollo, the god of poetry.

68. *Hakluyt*. The historian of the voyages of English sailors was in all probability a member of the company for planting Virginia.

THE LIE

(1618)

Sir Walter Raleigh was 'the most brilliant and many-sided of the Devonshire heroes of Elizabeth's reign' (Tout). Between 1580 and 1590 he had fought in the Irish wars; accompanied his half-brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, to Newfoundland; established himself as a Court favourite; made three attempts to colonize Virginia; and as Captain of the Guard organized the defence of England against the Armada. In the reign of James I, he became involved in the Arabella Stuart Plot and was sentenced to death. He was not, however, executed but imprisoned in the Tower, where he wrote his *History of the World*. In 1617 he persuaded the King to release him that he might conduct an expedition to Guiana in search of gold. On the Orinoco river he was attacked by the Spaniards, lost his son, and came back in 1618 a ruined man, to be meanly sacrificed by James, who, departing from Elizabeth's policy, was attempting to form a close alliance with Spain.

His last words written in the Gate-House at Westminster were:

Even such is time, that takes on trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with age and dust;
Who in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days!
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
The Lord shall raise me up, I trust!

Go, Soul, the Body's guest,
Upon a thankless arrant;
Fear not to touch the best!
The truth shall be thy warrant!
Go, since I needs must die,
And give the World the lie.

5

2. arrant] errand.

Go, tell the Court, it glows
And shines like rotten wood!
Say to the Church, it shows
What's good; and doth no good! 10
If Church and Court reply,
Then give them both the lie.

Tell Potentates, they live
Acting by others' action;
Not loved unless they give; 15
Not strong, but by affection.
If Potentates reply,
Give Potentates the lie!

Tell men of high condition,
That manage the Estate, 20
Their purpose is ambition;
Their practice, only hate!
And if they once reply,
Then give them all the lie!

SIR W. RALEIGH.

THE LANDING OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS

(1620)

The 'Pilgrim Fathers', separatists from and persecuted by the Established Church, sailed across the Atlantic to make a home where they might have freedom of worship. Half their numbers died of privation and disease within the first year, but the remainder resolutely held on, to establish on a firm footing the first of the New England group of colonies.

THE breaking waves dashed high
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods against a stormy sky
Their giant branches tossed.

And the heavy night hung dark 5
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted, came; 10
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame.

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear:—
They shook the depths of the desert gloom 15
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea:
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free! 20

The ocean eagle soared
From his nest by the white wave's foam:
And the rocking pines of the forest roared,—
This was their welcome home!

There were men with hoary hair 25
Amidst that pilgrim band:—
Why had *they* come to wither there,
Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye,
Lit by her deep love's truth; 30
There was manhood's brow serenely high,
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war? 35
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Aye, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod:
They have left unstained what there they found,—
Freedom to worship God.

40

F. HEMANS.

STRAFFORD

(1641)

In 1641, about a year before the beginning of the Great Rebellion, Strafford was impeached by the House of Commons for treason, especially in urging Charles I to use the Irish army against the English and Scots. The feeling against Strafford—Charles's most able supporter—was embittered by the fact that he had originally been on the side of the Parliament. As it became doubtful whether the legal interpretation would admit of conviction, the impeachment was dropped, and, instead, the Commons proceeded to an act of attainder, by which, without any trial, they were able simply to cast a vote enacting that Strafford should be executed.

SCENE: THE TOWER. [STRAFFORD *has been sitting with his children.*]

Strafford. Go, William! Anne, try o'er your
song again! [The children retire.

They shall be loyal, friend, at all events.

I know your message: you have nothing new 5

To tell me: from the first I guessed as much.

I know, instead of coming here himself

Leading me forth in public by the hand,

The King prefers to leave the door ajar

As though I were escaping—bids me trudge 10

While the mob gapes upon some show prepared

On the other side of the river! Give at once

His order of release! I've heard, as well,

Of certain poor manœuvrings to avoid

The granting pardon at his proper risk; 15

First, he must prattle somewhat to the Lords,

Must talk a trifle with the Commons first,

Be grieved I should abuse his confidence,
And far from blaming them, and . . . Where's the order?

Hollis. Spare me!

Strafford. Why, he'd not have me steal
away? 20

With an old doublet and a steeple hat
Like Prynne's? Be smuggled into France, perhaps?
Hollis, 'tis for my children! 'Twas for them

I first consented to stand day by day
And give your Puritans the best of words. 25

What's in that boy of mine that he should prove
Son to a prison-breaker? I shall stay
And he'll stay with me. Charles should know as
much—

He too has children!

[*Turning to HOLLIS'S companion.*] Sir, you feel
for me!

No need to hide that face! Though it have looked 30
Upon me from the judgement-seat . . . I know
Strangely, that somewhere it has looked on me . . .
Your coming has my pardon, nay, my thanks.
For there is one who comes not.

Hollis.

Whom forgive,

As one to die!

Strafford. True; all die, and all need 35

Forgiveness: I forgive him from my soul.

Hollis. 'Tis a world's wonder: *Strafford,* you
must die!

Strafford. Sir, if your errand is to set me free
This heartless jest mars much. Ha! Tears in truth?
We'll end this! See this paper, warm—feel—warm 40
With lying next my heart! Whose hand is there?
Whose promise? Read, and loud for God to hear!
'*Strafford* shall take no hurt'—read it, I say!
'In person, honour, nor estate'—

Hollis.

The King . . .

Strafford. I could unking him by a breath! You
sit 45

Where Loudon sat, who came to prophesy

The certain end, and offer me Pym's grace
If I'd renounce the King: and I stood firm
On the King's faith. The King who lives . . .

Hollis.

To sign

The warrant for your death.

Strafford.

'Put not your trust so
In princes, neither in the sons of men,
In whom is no salvation!'

Hollis.

Trust in God.

The scaffold is prepared: they wait for you:
He has consented. Cast the earth behind!

ATTENDANT [*throwing off the cloak and revealing
himself as CHARLES*].

Charles. You would not see me, Strafford, at
your foot!

55

It was wrung from me! Only curse me not!

Hollis. [*To STRAFFORD.*] As you hope grace
and pardon in your need,

Be merciful to this most wretched man!

[*Voices from within singing.*]

Strafford. You'll be good to those children, sir?

You know

All's between you and me: what has the world
To do with it? Farewell!

Charles [*at the door.*] Balfour! Balfour!

60

Enter BALFOUR.

The Parliament!—go to them: I grant all
Demands. Their sittings shall be permanent:
Tell them to keep their money if they will:
I'll come to them for every coat I wear
And every crust I eat: only I choose
To pardon Strafford.

65

Strafford. Balfour, say nothing to the world of
this!

I charge you, as a dying man, forget
You gazed upon this agony of one . . .

Of one . . . or if . . . why you may say, Balfour, 70
The King was sorry: 'tis no shame in him:

Yes, you may say he even wept, Balfour,
 And that I walked the lighter to the block
 Because of it. I shall walk lightly, sir!
 Earth fades, Heaven breaks on me: I shall stand
 next 75

Before God's throne: the moment's close at hand
 When Man the first, last time, has leave to lay
 His whole heart bare before its Maker, leave
 To clear up the long error of a life
 And choose one happiness for evermore. 80
 With all mortality about me, Charles,
 The sudden wreck, the dregs of violent death—
 What if, despite the opening angel-song,
 There penetrate one prayer for you? Be saved
 Through me! Bear witness, no one could prevent 85
 My death! Lead on! ere he awake—best, now!
 All must be ready: did you say, Balfour,
 The crowd began to murmur? They'll be kept
 Too late for sermon at St. Antholin's!
 Now! but tread softly—children are at play 90
 In the next room. Precede! I follow—

R. BROWNING (from *Strafford*).

20. *Hollis*. Sir Denzel Hollis, who held down the Speaker in his chair in 1629 to prevent him from adjourning the House at Charles's command. After Strafford's death he tried to act as mediator between Charles and the Parliament.

22. *Prynne*. A Puritan, who for writing satires reflecting on the Queen and the bishops was fined, pilloried, and committed to the Tower. He was released by the Long Parliament, and helped to prosecute Laud.

47. *Pym* was the leader in the impeachment and the attainder of Strafford, and with Hampden took the foremost part in that resistance to Charles which led up to the Civil War.

50. '*Put not your trust in princes . . .*' Psalm cxlvi. 3.

60. *Balfour*. Constable at the Tower.

89. *St. Antholin's*, or St. Antony's. The church in Budge Row which the officers of the Tower attended. (The monuments of this church are now preserved in the Tower.)

Oxford : Horace Hart
Printer to the University

LYRA HISTORICA

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A.D. 61-1910

SELECTED BY

M. E. WINDSOR

AND

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PART III: 1644-1910

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AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

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Thanks for permission to include poems and extracts are due to the following:—

Mr. Henry Newbolt for *Hawke*, from 'The Island Race', published by Elkin Mathews.

The Houghton Mifflin Co. for O. W. Holmes's *A Ballad of the Boston Tea Party*.

Mr. Thomas Hardy for extracts from *The Dynasts* and for *Embarcation*.

The Executors of the late J. K. Ingram for *The Memory of the Dead*, from 'Sonnets and other Poems', published by Messrs. A. & C. Black.

Messrs. Bradbury, Agnew & Co. for Shirley Brooks's *Havelock*. Mr. A. C. Benson for *Ode on the Right Hon. William Ewart Gladstone* (permission confirmed by Mr. John Lane).

Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co. for Mr. Andrew Lang's *The White Pacha* and *Advance, Australia*, from 'Grass of Parnassus'.

Mr. Rudyard Kipling and Messrs. Methuen & Co. for *Recessional*, from 'The Five Nations'.

Mr. T. Watts-Dunton for *England Stands Alone*.

Mr. Owen Seaman and Messrs. Bradbury, Agnew & Co. for *Queen Victoria*.

Mr. William Watson for an extract from *Sable and Purple* (permission confirmed by Mr. Eveleigh Nash).

Mr. T. Watts-Dunton for an extract from Swinburne's *The Armada*.

PART III

SIR NICHOLAS AT MARSTON MOOR

(1644)

Prince Rupert's army forced Scots and Parliamentarians to raise the siege of York. During the retirement the main body of the allied forces was broken, but Cromwell on the left wing stood firm, and coming to the support of the rest restored the fortune of the day, and after a desperate struggle routed and pursued Rupert's army to within three miles of York. This victory secured for the Parliament practically the whole of the North of England.

[See the Plan in Gardiner's *Historical Atlas*.]

To horse! to horse! Sir Nicholas, the clarion's note
is high!

To horse! to horse! Sir Nicholas, the big drum
makes reply!

Ere this hath Lucas marched, with his gallant
cavaliers,

And the bray of Rupert's trumpets grows fainter
in our ears.

To horse! to horse! Sir Nicholas! White Guy is
at the door,

And the raven whets his beak o'er the field of⁵
Marston Moor.

Up rose the Lady Alice from her brief and broken
prayer,

And she brought a silken banner down the narrow
turret-stair;

Oh! many were the tears that those radiant eyes
had shed,
As she traced the bright word 'Glory' in the gay
and glancing thread; ¹⁰
And mournful was the smile which o'er those lovely
features ran,
As she said: 'It is your lady's gift; unfurl it in
the van!'

'It shall flutter, noble wench, where the best and
boldest ride
Midst the steel-clad files of Skippon, the black
dragoons of Pride;
The recreant heart of Fairfax shall feel a sicklier
qualm, ¹⁵
And the rebel lips of Oliver give out a louder
psalm,
When they see my lady's gewgaw flaunt bravely
on their wing,
And hear her loyal soldier's shout, "For God and
for the King."'

'Tis noon. The ranks are broken, along the royal
line
They fly, the braggarts of the Court! the bullies
of the Rhine! ²⁰
Stout Langley's cheer is heard no more, and Astley's
helm is down,
And Rupert sheathes his rapier, with a curse and
with a frown,
And cold Newcastle mutters, as he follows in their
flight,
'The German boar had better far have supped in
York to-night.'

The knight is left alone, his steel-cap cleft in twain,
His good buff jerkin crimsoned o'er with many a
gory stain; ²⁶

Yet still he waves his banner, and cries amid the
rout,
'For Church and King, fair gentlemen! spur on,
and fight it out!
And now he wards a Roundhead's pike, and now
he hums a stave,
And now he quotes a stage-play, and now he fells
a knave.

30

God aid thee now, Sir Nicholas! thou hast no
thought of fear;
God aid thee now, Sir Nicholas! but fearful odds
are here!
The rebels hem thee in, and at every cut and thrust,
'Down, down,' they cry, 'with Belial! down with
him to the dust!'
'I would,' quoth grim old Oliver, 'that Belial's
trusty sword'
This day were doing battle for the Saints and for
the Lord!'

35

The Lady Alice sits with her maidens in her bower,
The grey-haired warder watches from the Castle's
topmost tower;
'What news? what news, old Hubert?'—'The
battle's lost and won:
The royal troops are melting like mists before the
sun!
And a wounded man approaches;—I'm blind and
cannot see,
Or sure I am that sturdy step, my master's step
should be!'

40

'I've brought thee back thy banner, wench, from
as rude and red a fray
As e'er was proof of soldier's thew, or theme for
minstrel's lay!

Here, Hubert, bring the silver bowl, and liquor
quantum suff;⁴⁵
 I'll make a shift to drain it yet, ere I part with
 boots and buff—
 Though Guy through many a gaping wound is
 breathing forth his life,
 And I come to thee a landless man, my fond and
 faithful wife.

'Sweet! we will fill our money-bags, and freight
 a ship for France,
 And mourn in merry Paris for this poor land's
 mischance:⁵⁰
 For if the worst befall me, why better axe and rope,
 Than life with Lenthall for a king, and Peters for
 a pope!
 Alas! alas! my gallant Guy!—curse on the crop-
 eared boor
 That sent me, with my standard, on foot from
 Marston Moor!'

W. M. PRAED.

14. *Skippon, Pride*. Parliamentary generals.
 15. *Fairfax*. See Introduction to Milton's Sonnet, *To the Lord General Fairfax*, p. 13.
 20. *The bullies of the Rhine*. Rupert's hired German troops.
 24. *The German boar*. Prince Rupert, the son of Frederick, Elector Palatine; nephew of Charles I.
 35. *Belial*. Means 'wickedness' in the Old Testament; the term is applied to Satan in the New Testament.
 45. *quantum suff*. As much as is sufficient.
 52. *Lenthall*. The Speaker of the Long Parliament.
Peters. Cromwell's chaplain during the War.

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY

(1645)

At Naseby, Cromwell, nominally second in command, was really responsible for the victory. Rupert broke the left wing of the Parliamentary army but allowed his men to gallop off in pursuit. Cromwell's wing drove the King's cavalry before him, and then re-formed to break up his centre, now attacked both in front and rear. The Cavaliers were pursued to within two miles of Leicester. Charles lost more than half of his army in killed and prisoners, and his private correspondence, which helped afterwards to decide his fate.

[See the plan in Gardiner's *Historical Atlas*.]

This poem represents the enthusiasm for their cause, and the violent hatred for the Court and Church party, which animated some of the Puritans.

Oh, wherefore come ye forth in triumph from the
north,

With your hands, and your feet, and your raiment
all red?

And wherefore doth your rout send forth a joyous
shout?

And whence be the grapes of the wine-press which
ye tread?

Oh, evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit, 5
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we
trod;

For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and
the strong,

Who sate in the high places, and slew the saints
of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June,
That we saw their banners dance, and their cuirasses
shine,¹⁰
And the Man of Blood was there, with his long
essenced hair,
And Astley, and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of
the Rhine.

Like a servant of the Lord, with his Bible and his
sword,
The general rode along us to form us to the fight,
When a murmuring sound broke out, and swelled
into a shout,¹⁵
Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's
right.

And hark! like the roar of the billows on the shore,
The cry of battle rises along their charging line!
For God! for the Cause! for the Church! for the
Laws!
For Charles King of England, and Rupert of the
Rhine!²⁰

The furious German comes, with his clarions and his
drums,
His bravoës of Alsatia and pages of Whitehall;
They are bursting on our flanks. Grasp your pikes,
close your ranks;
For Rupert never comes but to conquer or to fall.

They are here! They rush on! We are broken!
We are gone!²⁵
Our left is borne before them like stubble on the
blast.
O Lord, put forth thy might! O Lord, defend the
right!
Stand back to back, in God's name, and fight it
to the last.

Stout Skippon hath a wound; the centre hath
given ground.

Hark! hark! What means the trampling of horse-
men on our rear?

Whose banner do I see, boys? 'Tis he, thank God,
'tis he, boys.

Bear up another minute: brave Oliver is here.

Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a row,
Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on
the dykes,

Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the
Accurst,

And at a shock have scattered the forest of his
pikes.

Fast, fast, the gallants ride, in some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads, predestined to rot on Temple
Bar,

And he—he turns, he flies:—shame on those cruel
eyes

That bore to look on torture, and dare not look
on war!

Ho! comrades, scour the plain; and, ere ye strip
the slain,

First give another stab to make your search secure;
Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broad-
pieces and lockets,

The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the poor.

Fools! your doublets shone with gold, and your
hearts were gay and bold,

When you kissed your lily hands to your lemans
to-day;

And to-morrow shall the fox, from her chambers in
the rocks,

Lead forth her tawny cubs to howl above the prey.

46. lemans] sweethearts.

Where be your tongues that late mocked at heaven
and hell and fate,
And the fingers that once were so busy with your
blades, 50
Your perfumed satin clothes, your catches and your
oaths,
Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your diamonds
and your spades?

Down, down, for ever down with the mitre and the
crown,
With the Belial of the Court, and the Mammon
of the Pope;
There is woe in Oxford halls; there is wail in
Durham's stalls: 55
The Jesuit smites his bosom; the bishop rends
his cope.

And she of the seven hills shall mourn her children's
ills,
And tremble when she thinks on the edge of
England's sword;
And the kings of earth in fear shall shudder when
they hear
What the hand of God hath wrought for the
Houses and the Word. 60

LORD MACAULAY.

11. *the Man of Blood*. Charles I.

22. *Alsatia*. A notorious part of London, infested with
thieves and rascals.

29. *Skippon*. See note on *Sir Nicholas at Marston Moor*,
p. 8, l. 14.

38. *Temple Bar*. The heads of persons guilty of treason
were impaled on this gate, at the entrance to the City of London.

43. *broad-pieces*. Gold coins, worth twenty shillings, broader
and thinner than the guinea.

52. *stage-plays . . . diamonds . . . spades*. The Puritans con-
sidered card-playing and the theatre immoral.

51. catches] songs.

52. *sonnets*. Love-poems, or poems dealing with light and frivolous subjects, which the Puritans would have considered wicked.

53. *mitre*. i.e. the Pope, with whom the Puritans associated Laud and Charles's party in the Church.

54. *Belial*. See note to l. 35 of *Sir Nicholas at Marston Moor*, on p. 8.

Mammon. The personification of riches and worldliness. St. Matt. vi. 24, St. Luke xvi. 9.

55. *Oxford halls*. The Oxford colleges were on the King's side.

in Durham's stalls. Among the clergy attached to Durham Cathedral.

56. *Jesuit*. An order of priests founded by Ignatius Loyola in 1534. See note above to l. 53.

cope. A sleeveless, hooded mantle worn by priests.

TO THE LORD GENERAL FAIRFAX

(1648)

Thomas Fairfax commanded the right wing of the cavalry at Marston Moor (1644). Owing to his ability and integrity he was in 1645 appointed, in his father's stead, commander-in-chief of the new Model Army which won the battle of Naseby. He afterwards captured the chief Royalist centres of the West—Bristol, Tiverton, and Torrington—and in 1648 forced the surrender of Colchester (which was the occasion of the following sonnet). After the execution of Charles I he took little part in public affairs, and in 1650 resigned his command sooner than invade Scotland. At Cromwell's death he joined General Monk in declaring for the restoration of Charles II, and secured the North by occupying York.

FAIRFAX, whose name in arms through Europe rings,
Filling each mouth with envy or with praise,
And all her jealous monarchs with amaze
And rumours loud, that daunt remotest kings,
Thy firm unshaken virtue ever brings 5
Victory home, though new rebellions raise
Their Hydra heads, and the false north displays
Her broken league to imp their serpent wings.

8. imp] renew.

Oh! yet a nobler task awaits thy hand
(For what can war but endless war still breed?)
Till truth and right from violence be freed, 11
And public faith cleared from the shameful brand
Of public fraud. In vain doth valour bleed,
While avarice and rapine share the land.

J. MILTON.

7. *Hydra*. A legendary serpent with many heads, which when cut off were succeeded by others.

the false north. A reference to the second part of the Civil War. In 1648 the Scots privately concluded a treaty with Charles, whom they promised to restore in return for the establishment of Presbyterianism.

HORATIAN ODE UPON CROMWELL'S RETURN FROM IRELAND

(1650)

This ode was written when Cromwell had hurriedly returned to London, to take command of the army which was to invade Scotland. [See introduction, *To the Lord General Fairfax*.]

THE forward youth that would appear
Must now forsake his Muses dear,
Nor in the shadows sing
His numbers languishing.

'Tis time to leave the books in dust, 5
And oil the unused armour's rust,
Removing from the wall
The corslet of the hall.

So restless Cromwell could not cease
In the inglorious arts of peace, 10
But through the adventurous war
Urged his active star:

8. corslet] breast-plate.

And like the three-fork'd lightning, first
Breaking the clouds where it was nurst,
Did thorough his own side
His fiery way divide: 15

For 'tis all one to courage high,
The emulous, or enemy;
And with such, to enclose
Is more than to oppose. 20

Then burning through the air he went
And palaces and temples rent;
And Caesar's head at last
Did through his laurels blast.

'Tis madness to resist or blame 25
The face of angry Heaven's flame;
And if we would speak true,
Much to the man is due,

Who, from his private gardens, where
He lived reserved and austere 30
(As if his highest plot
To plant the bergamot),

Could by industrious valour climb
To ruin the great work of time,
And cast the Kingdoms old 35
Into another mould;

Though Justice against Fate complain,
And plead the ancient rights in vain—
But those do hold or break
As men are strong or weak— 40

32. bergamot] pear-tree.

Nature, that hateth emptiness,
Allows of penetration less,
And therefore must make room
Where greater spirits come.

What field of all the civil war 45
Where his were not the deepest scar?
And Hampton shows what part
He had of wiser art;

Where, twining subtle fears with hope,
He wove a net of such a scope 50
That Charles himself might chase
To Caresbrooke's narrow case;

That thence the Royal actor borne
The tragic scaffold might adorn:
While round the armèd bands 55
Did clap their bloody hands.

He nothing common did or mean
Upon that memorable scene,
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try; 60

Nor call'd the gods, with vulgar spite,
To vindicate his helpless right;
But bow'd his comely head
Down, as upon a bed.

This was that memorable hour 65
Which first assured the forcèd power:
So when they did design
The Capitol's first line,

A bleeding Head, where they begun,
Did fright the architects to run; 70
And yet in that the State
Foresaw its happy fate!

Horatian Ode, i.e. one in the style of Horace.

17-20. i.e. rivalry and hostility are the same to men of noble mind, and limitation is worse than opposition.

23. *Caesar's*. Charles I's, whose attempt to establish despotism in England is compared to Julius Caesar's in Rome.

41. *Nature, that hateth emptiness*. A reference to the exploded fallacy that 'Nature abhors a vacuum'.

42. *Allows of penetration less*, i.e. even still less than it permits a vacuum does Nature allow one body to enter where already there is another—in reference to the scientific axiom that two bodies cannot simultaneously occupy the same space.

47. *Hampton*. Hampton Court Palace, where Cromwell tried to come to terms with Charles.

52. *Caresbrooke's narrow case*. The castle in the Isle of Wight to which Charles I fled from Hampton Court.

69. *A bleeding Head*. When the foundations of the Capitol at Rome were being dug a human head was discovered, and interpreted as a good omen.

TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL

(1650)

'This Sonnet may well stand as Milton's tribute of respect to Cromwell on the whole, and little wonder he did not dare to print it in the edition of his Poems in 1673' (Masson).

Milton hoped that Cromwell would prevent the formation of a Presbyterian State Church ('secular chains'), about which the Rump was disputing.

CROMWELL, our chief of men, who through a cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast ploughed,
And on the neck of crown'd Fortune proud 5
Hast reared God's trophies, and His work pursued,
While Darwen stream with blood of Scots imbrued
And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud

And Worcester's laureate wreath; yet much remains
 To conquer still; peace hath her victories 10
 No less renowned than war, new foes arise
 Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains:
 Help us to save free conscience from the paw
 Of hireling wolves whose gospel is their maw.

J. MILTON.

7. *Darwen stream*. Preston Fight (1648), when Cromwell destroyed the Duke of Hamilton's army in a three days' battle.

8. *Dunbar*. Where Cromwell defeated the Scots in 1650, and secured Scotland for the Commonwealth.

9. *Worcester's laureate wreath*. Cromwell in his dispatch called this victory his 'crowning mercy'.

14. *hireling wolves*. To Milton's 'Independent' soul, any State Church—Anglican or Presbyterian—was hateful: 'New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large.' (See his poem *On the New Forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament*.)

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT

(1655)

The cruel persecution of the Vaudois Protestants by the Prince of Piedmont was stopped by Cromwell's vigorous remonstrance—an interesting proof of the position to which Cromwell had raised England in the councils of Europe. An alliance of the Protestant Powers was the leading idea of his foreign policy.

AVENGE, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
 Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
 Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
 When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
 Forget not: in thy book record their groans 5
 Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
 Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that rolled
 Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans

The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway ¹¹
The triple Tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundredfold, who, having learnt thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

J. MILTON.

THE FIRE OF LONDON

(1666)

The Great Fire, lasting for five days, destroyed more than half of the city of London, including St. Paul's Cathedral.

It was not without its good effect. A new London arose, with wider streets and better sanitary arrangements; and from 1666 no more outbreaks of the Plague are recorded.

[For a contemporary account of the Fire, see Pepys' *Diary* under date September 2-5, 1666, and Evelyn's *Diary* of the same time.]

SWELLED with our late successes on the foe,
Which France and Holland wanted power to cross,
We urge an unseen fate to lay us low
And feed their envious eyes with English loss.

Yet, London, empress of the northern clime, ⁵
By an high fate thou greatly didst expire;
Great as the world's which at the death of time
Must fall and rise a nobler frame by fire.

As when some dire usurper Heaven provides
To scourge his country with a lawless sway; ¹⁰
His birth perhaps some petty village hides
And sets his cradle out of Fortune's way;

Till, fully ripe, his swelling fate breaks out
And hurries him to mighty mischiefs on;
His Prince, surprised, at first no ill could doubt, 15
And wants the power to meet it when 'tis known.

Such was the rise of this prodigious fire,
Which, in mean buildings first obscurely bred,
From thence did soon to open streets aspire
And straight to palaces and temples spread. 20

The diligence of trades, and noiseful gain,
And luxury, more late, asleep were laid;
All was the Night's, and in her silent reign
No sound the rest of Nature did invade.

In this deep quiet, from what source unknown, 25
Those seeds of fire their fatal birth disclose;
And first few scattering sparks about were blown,
Big with the flames that to our ruin rose.

Then in some close-pent room it crept along
And, smouldering as it went, in silence fed; 30
Till the infant monster, with devouring strong,
Walked boldly upright with exalted head.

The ghosts of traitors from the Bridge descend
With bold fanatic spectres to rejoice;
About the fire into a dance they bend 35
And sing their sabbath notes with feeble voice.

Now streets grow thronged and busy as by day:
Some run for buckets to the hallowed quire;
Some cut the pipes, and some the engines play,
And some, more bold, mount ladders to the fire. 40

In vain; for from the east a Belgian wind
His hostile breath through the dry rafters sent;
The flames impelled soon left their foes behind
And forward with a wanton fury went.

A key of fire ran all along the shore
And lighted all the river with a blaze;
The wakened tides began again to roar,
And wondering fish in shining waters gaze. 45

The fire meantime walks in a broader gross;
To either hand his wings he opens wide; 50
He wades the streets, and straight he reaches cross
And plays his longing flames on the other side.

At first they warm, then scorch, and then they take;
Now with long necks from side to side they feed;
At length, grown strong, their mother-fire forsake, 55
And a new colony of flames succeed.

To every nobler portion of the town
The curling billows roll their restless tide;
In parties now they straggle up and down,
As armies unopposed for prey, divide. 60

One mighty squadron, with a sidewind sped,
Through narrow lanes his cumbered fire does haste,
By powerful charms of gold and silver led
The Lombard bankers and the Change to waste.

Another backward to the Tower would go 65
And slowly eat his way against the wind;
But the main body of the marching foe
Against the imperial palace is designed.

Now day appears; and with the day the King,
Whose early care had robbed him of his rest; 70
Far off the cracks of falling houses ring
And shrieks of subjects pierce his tender breast.

Near as he draws, thick harbingers of smoke
With gloomy pillars cover all the place;
Whose little intervals of night are broke 75
By sparks that drive against his sacred face.

Nor with an idle care did he behold:
Subjects may grieve, but monarchs must redress;
He cheers the fearful and commends the bold
And makes despairers hope for good success. 80

Himself directs what first is to be done
And orders all the succours which they bring;
The helpful and the good about him run
And form an army worthy such a king.

The wanting orphans saw with watery eyes 85
Their founders' charity in dust laid low,
And sent to God their ever-answered cries;
For he protects the poor who made them so.

Nor could thy fabric, Paul's, defend thee long,
Though thou wert sacred to thy Maker's praise, 90
Though made immortal by a poet's song,
And poets' songs the Theban walls could raise.

The daring flames peeped in and saw from far
The awful beauties of the sacred quire;
But, since it was profaned by civil war, 95
Heaven thought it fit to have it purged by fire.

Now down the narrow streets it swiftly came
And, widely opening, did on both sides prey;
This benefit we sadly owe the flame,
If only ruin must enlarge our way. 100

J. DRYDEN.

1. *late successes*. In the Dutch War, 1665-7. It is a euphemism to call them 'successes'.

33. *the Bridge*. London Bridge, where were exhibited the heads of the Regicides who were executed after the Restoration.

64. *the Change*. The Royal Exchange.

68. *imperial palace*. Whitehall.

89. *Paul's*, i. e. the Cathedral.

91. *a poet's song*. Waller's poem *Upon His Majesty's repairing of St. Paul's*.

THE COVENANTER'S LAMENT

(1679)

After the Restoration an Act was passed for the re-establishment of Episcopacy in Scotland. The Covenanters took up arms on behalf of the Presbyterian form of church government, but Monmouth destroyed their army in 1679 at Bothwell Bridge, taking 1,200 prisoners, many of whom were hanged, and others shipped off as slaves to the West Indies.

THE men of sin prevail!
Once more the prince of this world lifts his horn;
Judah is scattered, as the chaff is borne
Before the stormy gale.

Where are our brethren? where
The good and true, the terrible and fleet? 5
They whom we loved, with whom we sat at meat,
With whom we kneeled in prayer?

Mangled and marred they lie
Upon the bloody pillow of their rest; 10
Stern Dalziel smiles, and Clavers with a jest
Spurs his fierce charger by.

So let our foes rejoice;
We to the Lord, who hears their impious boasts,
Will call for comfort; to the God of hosts 15
We will lift up our voice.

Give ear unto our song;
For we are wandering o'er our native land
As sheep that have no shepherd; and the hand 20
Of wicked men is strong.

Only to thee we bow:
Our lips have drained the fury of thy cup;
And the deep murmurs of our hearts go up
To Heaven for vengeance now.

Avenge,—oh! not our years 25
Of pain and wrong, the blood of martyrs shed,
The ashes heaped upon the hoary head,
The maiden's silent tears,

The babe's bread torn away,
The harvest blasted by the war-steed's hoof, 30
The red flame wreathing o'er the cottage roof,
Judge not for these to-day!—

Is not thine own dread rod
Mocked by the proud, thy holy book disdained,
Thy name blasphemed, thy temple courts profaned?—
Avenge Thyself, O God! 36

Break Pharaoh's iron crown;
Bind with new chains their nobles and their kings;
Wash from thine house the blood of unclean things,
And hurl their Dagon down! 40

Come in thine own good time!
We will abide; we have not turned from thee,
Though in a world of grief our portion be,
Of bitter grief and crime.

Be thou our guard and guide! 45
Forth from the spoiler's synagogue we go,
That we may worship where the torrents flow
And where the whirlwinds ride.

From lonely rocks and caves
We will pour forth our sacrifice of prayer.— 50
On, brethren, to the mountains! seek we there
Safe temples, quiet graves!

W. M. PRAED.

11. *Stern Dalziel*. Commander-in-chief of the royal forces in Scotland in Charles II's reign. After the victory at Bothwell Bridge, he reproached Monmouth for his too great leniency. He himself threatened to 'spit and roast all insurgents'.

Clavers. 'Bonnie Dundee' (1689).

40. *Dagon*. The God of the Philistines, here the Church of England.

TRELAWNY

(1688)

Trelawny, a Cornishman, and Bishop of Bristol, was one of the seven bishops who petitioned to be excused from reading the Declaration of Indulgence to non-Protestants. Their arrest and trial for sedition brought the discontent against James II to a head, even the Cornish miners threatening to rise and march on London.

Only the three lines, 'And shall Trelawny die,' &c., are contemporary.

A GOOD sword and a trusty hand!

A merry heart and true!

King James's men shall understand

What Cornish lads can do.

And have they fixed the where and when? 5

And shall Trelawny die?

Here's twenty thousand Cornish men

Will know the reason why!

Out spake their captain brave and bold,

A merry wight was he:

10

'If London Tower were Michael's hold,

We'll set Trelawny free!

'We'll cross the Tamar, land to land,

The Severn is no stay,

With "one and all", and hand in hand, 15

And who shall bid us nay?

'And when we come to London Wall,

A pleasant sight to view,

Come forth! come forth, ye cowards all,

Here's men as good as you.

20

'Trelawny he's in keep and hold,
Trelawny he may die;
But here's twenty thousand Cornish bold
Will know the reason why!'

R. S. HAWKER.

11. *Michael's hold*. St. Michael's Mount, Cornwall.

15. '*One and all*'. The motto of Cornwall and the County regiments.

BONNIE DUNDEE

(1689)

John Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, the last of the Cavaliers, had been employed by James II in coercing the Covenanters, by whom he was hated for his ruthlessness. He headed the Jacobite opposition to William III, but could make no headway in the Lowlands. He therefore retired to the North, where he raised an army of Highlanders, and with them defeated the regular troops under General Mackay at the pass of Killcrankie, 1689, but was himself killed in the battle.

To the Lords of Convention 'twas Claver'se who spoke,
'Ere the King's crown shall fall there are crowns to
be broke;

So let each Cavalier who loves honour and me,
Come follow the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

*'Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can, 5
Come saddle your horses, and call up your men;
Come ope the West Port, and let me gang free,
And it's room for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee!'*

Dundee he is mounted, he rides up the street,
The bells are rung backward, the drums they are
beat;

But the Provost, douce man, said, 'Just e'en let him be,
The Gude Town is weel quit of that Deil of Dundee.'

Come fill up my cup, &c.

11. *douce*] good.

With sour-featured Whigs the Grassmarket was
cramm'd

As if half the West had set tryst to be hang'd; ¹⁵
There was spite in each look, there was fear in each e'e,
As they watch'd for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, &c.

These cowls of Kilmarnock had spits and had spears,
And lang-hafted gullies to kill Cavaliers; ²⁰
But they shrunk to close-heads, and the causeway
was free,

At the toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, &c.

He spurr'd to the foot of the proud Castle rock,
And with the gay Gordon he gallantly spoke; ²⁵
'Let Mons Meg and her marrows speak twa words
or three,

For the love of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.'

Come fill up my cup, &c.

The Gordon demands of him which way he goes—
'Where'er shall direct me the shade of Montrose! ³⁰
Your Grace in short space shall hear tidings of me,
Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, &c.

'There are hills beyond Pentland, lands beyond
Forth;

If there's lords in the Lowlands, there's chiefs in
the North; ³⁵

There are wild Duniewassals, three thousand times
three,

Will cry *Hoigh!* for the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, &c.

^{20.} lang-hafted] long-handled. gullies] knives. ^{21.} close-heads] entrances to alleys. ^{26.} marrows] companions.

'There's brass on the target of barken'd bull-hide
There's steel in the scabbard that dangles beside; 40
The brass shall be burnish'd, the steel shall flash free
At a toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, &c.

'Away to the hills, to the caves, to the rocks—
Ere I own an usurper, I'll couch with the fox; 45
And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst of your glee,
You have not seen the last of my bonnet and me!

Come fill up my cup, &c.

He waved his proud hand, and the trumpets were
blown, 49
The kettle-drums clash'd, and the horsemen rode on,
Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on Clermiston's lee,
Died away the wild war-notes of Bonny Dundee.

*Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle the horses and call up the men,
Come open your gates, and let me gae free, 55
For it's up with the bonnets of Bonny Dundee!*



SIR W. SCOTT.

1. *Lords of Convention.* The parliament of the Scottish Estates, representing the clergy and the nobility, who met at Edinburgh to settle the government of Scotland at the Revolution of 1689.

7. *the West Port.* One of the exits of Edinburgh.

14. *Grassmarket.* A street in Edinburgh.

25. *gay Gordon.* The Marquis of Huntly, first Duke of Gordon, was Constable of Edinburgh Castle in 1689. After an interview with Claverhouse he agreed to hold the Castle for James II but would not promise to fire on the Convention. He subsequently surrendered the Castle, three days before the battle of Killcrankie.

26. *Mons Meg,* a gun in Edinburgh Castle. It was cast at Mons in Flanders. (Meg = Maggie.)

30. *shade of Montrose.* The Earl of Montrose attempted a rising in favour of Charles II, but was defeated and executed in 1650.

36. *Duniewassals.* Highland gentlemen.

KILLICRANKIE

(1689)

This sonnet was written by Wordsworth on his first sight of the pass of Killicrankie in 1803, when an invasion of the French was expected.

SIX thousand veterans practised in war's game,
Tried men, at Killicrankie were arrayed
Against an equal host that wore the plaid,
Shepherds and herdsmen.—Like a whirlwind came
The Highlanders, the slaughter spread like flame; 5
And Garry, thundering down his mountain-road,
Was stopped, and could not breathe beneath the load
Of the dead bodies.—'Twas a day of shame
For them whom precept and the pedantry
Of cold mechanic battle do enslave. 10
O for a single hour of that Dundee,
Who on that day the word of onset gave!
Like conquest would the Men of England see;
And her Foes find a like inglorious grave.

W. WORDSWORTH.

THE MASSACRE OF GLENCOE

(1692)

Maclan (or 'Glencoe') was the last of the Scottish chiefs to take the oath of allegiance to William III. He reached Fort William for this purpose after the appointed day. His oath was accepted; but, through the malice of either Argyle or the Master of Stair, his submission was not reported to the Council of Edinburgh. Six weeks later Maclan and almost the whole of the Macdonald clan were murdered by a contingent of Argyle's regiment which had lived with them for a fortnight as guests.

'O TELL me, Harper, wherefore flow
Thy wayward notes of wail and woe,
Far down the desert of Glencoe,
Where none may list their melody?

Say, harp'st thou to the mists that fly, 5
Or to the dun-deer glancing by,
Or to the eagle, that from high
Screams chorus to thy minstrelsy?'—

'No, not to these, for they have rest,—
The mist-wreath has the mountain-crest, 10
The stag his lair, the erne her nest,
Abode of lone security.

But those for whom I pour the lay,
Not wild-wood deep, nor mountain grey,
Not this deep dell, that shrouds from day, 15
Could screen from treach'rous cruelty.

'Their flag was furl'd, and mute their drum,
The very household dogs were dumb,
Unwont to bay at guests that come
In guise of hospitality. 20
His blithest notes the piper plied,
Her gayest snood the maiden tied,
The dame her distaff flung aside,
To tend her kindly housewifery.

'The hand that mingled in the meal 25
At midnight drew the felon steel,
And gave the host's kind breast to feel
Meed for his hospitality!
The friendly hearth which warm'd that hand,
At midnight arm'd it with the brand, 30
That bade destruction's flames expand
Their red and fearful blazonry.

'Then woman's shriek was heard in vain,
Nor infancy's unpitied plain,
More than the warrior's groan, could gain 35
Respite from ruthless butchery!

11. erne] eagle.

22. snood] ribbon.

28. meed] reward.

The winter wind that whistled shrill,
The snows that night that cloked the hill,
Though wild and pitiless, had still
Far more than Southern clemency.

40

'Long have my harp's best notes been gone,
Few are its strings, and faint their tone,
They can but sound in desert lone
Their grey-hair'd master's misery.
Were each grey hair a minstrel string
Each chord should imprecations fling,
Till startled Scotland loud should ring,
'Revenge for blood and treachery!'

45

SIR W. SCOTT.

MARLBOROUGH AT BLENHEIM

(1704)

Blenheim was the first of that series of victories by Marlborough which shook the military prestige of France, and eventually led to the Treaty of Utrecht, with its far-reaching effects on the establishment of England as a great power.

BUT, O my muse, what numbers wilt thou find
To sing the furious troops in battle joined!
Methinks I hear the drum's tumultuous sound
The victor's shouts and dying groans confound,
The dreadful burst of cannon rend the skies,
And all the thunder of the battle rise.
'Twas then great Marlborough's mighty soul was
proved,
That, in the shock of charging hosts unmoved,
Amidst confusion, horror, and despair,
Examined all the dreadful scenes of war;

5

10

In peaceful thought the field of death surveyed,
 To fainting squadrons sent the timely aid,
 Inspired repulsed battalions to engage,
 And taught the doubtful battle where to rage.
 So when an angel by divine command 15
 With rising tempests shakes a guilty land,
 Such as of late o'er pale Britannia past,
 Calm and serene he drives the furious blast;
 And, pleased the Almighty's orders to perform,
 Rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm. 20

J. ADDISON (from *The Campaign*).

A JACOBITE'S EPITAPH

(1715)

On the flight of James II to France in 1688 some of his supporters preferred to go into exile with him, rather than recognize William and Mary as lawful sovereigns. Many of the Jacobites also took refuge in France and Italy after the failure of the risings in 1715 and 1745.

No kings ever had such faithful servants as the Stuarts had, and no servants were ever treated so ungratefully.

To my true king I offered, free from stain,
 Courage and faith: vain faith, and courage vain.
 For him I threw lands, honours, wealth, away,
 And one dear hope, that was more prized than they.
 For him I languished in a foreign clime, 5
 Grey-haired with sorrow in my manhood's prime;
 Heard on Lavernia Scargill's whispering trees,
 And pined by Arno for my lovelier Tees;
 Beheld each night my home in fevered sleep,
 Each morning started from the dream to weep; 10
 Till God, who saw me tried too sorely, gave
 The resting-place I asked, an early grave.

O thou, whom chance leads to this nameless stone,
From that proud country which was once mine own,
By those white cliffs I never more must see, 15
By that dear language which I spake like thee,
Forget all feuds, and shed one English tear
O'er English dust. A broken heart lies here.

LORD MACAULAY.

7. *Lavernia*. A reference to a grove near Rome in which stood a temple dedicated to the goddess Lavernia.

Scargill's. Scargill Cliff, about 900 feet high, is on the Yorkshire moors four miles south of Barnard Castle. [See Scott's *Rokeby*, III. xi.]

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE

(1742)

Walpole was Prime Minister from 1721-40. For nineteen years he kept England at peace, and completed and confirmed the settlement of the Revolution.

SEEN him I have, but in his happier hour
Of social pleasure, ill-exchanged for power;
Seen him, uncumbered with the venal tribe,
Smile without art, and win without a bribe.
Would he oblige me? let me only find, 5
He does not think me what he thinks mankind.

A. POPE (from *The Epilogue to the Satires*).

6. *what he thinks mankind*. Referring to what probably he did *not* say of the Commons: 'Every man has his price.' [See Morley's *Walpole*.]

CHARLIE IS MY DARLING

(1745)

The Jacobite rising of '45, in favour of Charles Edward, grand-son of James II (called the Young Pretender by his foes, the Young Chevalier and Prince of Wales by his partisans), began in a blaze of success. The Prince defeated George II's forces at Preston Pans; held his court at Edinburgh in Holyrood; and, even after his retreat from his march south, towards the end of 1745, inflicted a severe check on the King's troops at Falkirk in January 1746.

'Twas on a Monday morning,
Right early in the year,
When Charlie came to our town,
The young Chevalier.

Oh, Charlie is my darling, 5
My darling, my darling,
Oh, Charlie is my darling,
The young Chevalier.

As he came marching up the street,
The pipes play'd loud and clear, 10
And a' the folks came running out
To meet the Chevalier.

Oh, Charlie is my darling, &c.

Wi' Hieland bonnets on their heads,
And claymores bright and clear, 15
They came to fight for Scotland's right,
And the young Chevalier.

Oh, Charlie is my darling, &c.

They've left their bonnie Hieland hills,
Their wives and bairnies dear,
To draw the sword for Scotland's lord,
The young Chevalier.

20

Oh, Charlie is my darling, &c.

Oh, there were many beating hearts,
And many a hope and fear,
And many were the prayers put up
For the young Chevalier.

25

Oh, Charlie is my darling, &c.

LADY NAIRNE.

THE LOVELY LASS OF INVERNESS

(1746)

Two months after the battle of Falkirk (see introduction to last poem) the Jacobite rising of '45 ended in disaster at the battle of Culloden (or Drumossie Moor), near Inverness. The Highlanders were defeated, and the Duke of Cumberland (George II's brother), who was in command of the King's army, earned for himself the nickname of 'Butcher' by his ruthless slaughter of the flying enemy.

THE lovely lass o' Inverness,
Nae joy nor pleasure can she see;
For e'en and morn she cries, alas;
And aye the saut tear blins her ee:
Drumossie moor, Drumossie day,
A waefu' day it was to me;
For there I lost my father dear,
My father dear, and brethren three.

5

Their winding-sheet the bluidy clay,
 Their graves are growing green to see;
 And by them lies the dearest lad 11
 That ever blest a woman's ee!
 Now wae to thee, thou cruel lord,
 A bluidy man I trow thou be;
 For mony a heart thou hast made sair, 15
 That ne'er did wrang to thine or thee.

R. BURNS.

HOW SLEEP THE BRAVE

(1746)

This lovely dirge was written early in 1746. Britain had become involved in the War of the Austrian Succession: in 1745 British soldiers had taken part in the fierce battle of Fontenoy. [See introduction to last poem.]

How sleep the brave, who sink to rest
 By all their country's wishes blest!
 When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
 Returns to deck their hallow'd mould,
 She there shall dress a sweeter sod 5
 Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung,
 By forms unseen their dirge is sung:
 There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
 To bless the turf that wraps their clay; 10
 And Freedom shall awhile repair
 To dwell a weeping hermit there!

W. COLLINS.

HAWKE

(1759)

Hawke was admiral in command of the fleet blockading Brest during the Seven Years' War. When the French fleet came out he drove it towards Quiberon. Shoals and quicksands made it dangerous to attack; but Hawke refused to listen to the warning of his pilot and gave battle. The result was a great victory for England which staved off all risk of a French invasion.

In seventeen hundred and fifty-nine,
When Hawke came swooping from the West,
The French King's Admiral with twenty of the line
Was sailing forth to sack us, out of Brest.
The ports of France were crowded, the quays of
France a-hum
With thirty thousand soldiers marching to the drum,
For bragging time was over and fighting time was
come
When Hawke came swooping from the West.

'Twas long past noon of a wild November day
When Hawke came swooping from the West; 10
He heard the breakers thundering in Quiberon Bay,
But he flew the flag for battle, line abreast.
Down upon the 'quicksands roaring out of sight
Fiercely beat the storm-wind, darkly fell the night,
But they took the foe for pilot and the cannon's
glare for light 15
When Hawke came swooping from the West.

The Frenchmen turned like a covey down the wind
When Hawke came swooping from the West;
One he sank with all hands, one he caught and
pinned,
And the shallows and the storm took the rest. 20

The guns that should have conquered us they rusted
on the shore,
The men that would have mastered us they drummed
and marched no more,
For England was England, and a mighty brood
she bore
When Hawke came swooping from the West.

H. NEWBOLT.

A BALLAD OF THE BOSTON TEA PARTY

(1773)

Boston in Massachusetts was always strongly Puritan in tone, and generally at variance with the Home government. It took the lead in resisting the taxation imposed upon the Colonies after the Seven Years' War. In 1773 the inhabitants of Boston destroyed a cargo of tea worth £18,000 sooner than pay the duty.

As a punishment, Lord North in 1774 carried through the Boston Port Bill, which declared it illegal to load or unload any ship at Boston. This meant ruin to the town; intense indignation arose throughout America and war became inevitable.

NO! ne'er was mingled such a draught
In palace, hall, or arbour,
As freemen brewed and tyrants quaffed
That night in Boston Harbour!
It kept King George so long awake 5
His brain at last got addled,
It made the nerves of Britain shake,
With sevenscore millions saddled;
Before that bitter cup was drained,
Amid the roar of cannon, 10
The Western war-cloud's crimson stained
The Thames, the Clyde, the Shannon;

Full many a six-foot grenadier
 The flattened grass had measured,
 And many a mother many a year 15
 Her tearful memories treasured;
 Fast spread the tempest's darkening pall,
 The mighty realms were troubled,
 The storm broke loose, but first of all
 The Boston teapot bubbled! 20

An evening party,—only that,
 No formal invitation,
 No gold-laced coat, no stiff cravat,
 No feast in contemplation, 25
 No silk-robed dames, no fiddling band,
 No flowers, no songs, no dancing,—
 A tribe of red men, axe in hand,—
 Behold the guests advancing!
 How fast the stragglers join the throng,
 From stall and workshop gathered! 30
 The lively barber skips along
 And leaves a chin half-lathered;
 The smith has flung his hammer down,—
 The horseshoe still is glowing;
 The truant tapster at the Crown 35
 Has left a beer-cask flowing,
 The cooper's boys have dropped the adze,
 And trot behind their master;
 Up run the tarry ship-yard lads,—
 The crowd is hurrying faster,— 40
 Out from the Millpond's purlieus gush
 The streams of white-faced millers,
 And down their slippery alleys rush
 The lusty young Fort-Hillers,
 The ropewalk lends its prentice crew,— 45
 The Tories seize the omen:
 'Ay, boys, you'll soon have work to do
 For England's rebel foemen,

"King Hancock", Adams, and their gang,
That fire the mob with treason,— 50
When these we shoot and those we hang
The town will come to reason.'

On—on to where the tea-ships ride!
And now their ranks are forming,—
A rush, and up the Dartmouth's side 55
The Mohawk band is swarming!
See the fierce natives! What a glimpse
Of paint and fur and feather,
As all at once the full-grown imps
Light on the deck together! 60
A scarf the pigtail's secret keeps,
A blanket hides the breeches,—
And out the cursèd cargo leaps,
And overboard it pitches!

The waves that wrought a century's wreck
Have rolled o'er Whig and Tory; 66
The Mohawks on the Dartmouth's deck
Still live in song and story;
The waters in the rebel bay
Have kept the tea-leaf savour; 70
Our old North-Enders in their spray
Still taste a Hyson flavour;
And Freedom's teacup still o'erflows
With ever fresh libations,
To cheat of slumber all her foes 75
And cheer the wakening nations!

O. W. HOLMES.

45. *rope walk*. A long alley where rope yarn is made.

46. *Tories*. Here used for the Colonists who remained loyal to English rule.

49. *King Hancock*. John Hancock organized the party of Bostonians who, disguised as a tribe of Mohawk Indians, threw the tea overboard.

Adams. Samuel Adams, a great orator, and leader in the separation of the thirteen States from England.

55. *the Dartmouth*. One of the East India Company's ships, whose cargo was ruined.

66. *Whig*. Here applied to the Colonists who resisted the Home government. (See Bancroft's *History of the United States*, vol. III, ch. xxxiv.)

72. *Hyson*. Green tea from China.

THE SHAN VAN VOCHT

(1798)

Since 1782 Ireland had possessed an independent Parliament, which, however, represented only the Protestant minority. In 1791 the discontent due chiefly to the repression of the Roman Catholics and the miserable poverty of the peasantry led to the formation of a society called the *United Irishmen*. Its proposed object was parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation, but the influence of the French Revolution caused many of the members to aim at complete independence from England. The English government had no settled policy, and in 1798 civil war broke out. The miserably equipped army of the Irish was, however, easily defeated at Vinegar Hill, and the rising was soon suppressed.

The 'Shan Van Vocht' (The Poor Old Woman, i.e. Ireland) was a popular street-song of the time.

OH! the French are on the sea,

Says the Shan Van Vocht;

The French are on the sea,

Says the Shan Van Vocht;

Oh! the French are in the Bay,

5

They'll be here without delay,

And the Orange will decay,

Says the Shan Van Vocht.

Oh! the French are in the Bay,

They'll be here by break of day,

10

And the Orange will decay,

Says the Shan Van Vocht.

And where will they have their camp?

Says the Shan Van Vocht;

Where will they have their camp?

15

Says the Shan Van Vocht;

On the Curragh of Kildare,
The boys they will be there,
With their pikes in good repair,
Says the Shan Van Vocht. 20
To the Curragh of Kildare
The boys they will repair,
And Lord Edward will be there,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.

Then what will the yeomen do? 25
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
What will the yeomen do?
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
What should the yeomen do,
But throw off the red and blue, 30
And swear that they'll be true
To the Shan Van Vocht?
What should the yeomen, &c.

And what colour will they wear?
Says the Shan Van Vocht; 35
What colour will they wear?
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
What colour should be seen
Where our Fathers' homes have been,
But their own immortal Green? 40
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
What colour should, &c.

And will Ireland then be free?
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
Will Ireland then be free? 45
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
Yes! Ireland shall be free,
From the centre to the sea;
Then hurrah for Liberty!
Says the Shan Van Vocht. 50
Yes! Ireland shall &c.

ANONYMOUS.

5. *the Bay*. Bantry Bay, into which a French fleet sailed in 1796.

7. *the Orange*. In opposition to the United Irishmen the extreme Protestants formed clubs, called Orange Lodges after William of Orange.

21. *the Curragh of Kildare* is a camp outside Dublin.

23. *Lord Edward*. Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who went to France to organize a French invasion of Ireland. He afterwards died of wounds received in resisting arrest for treason.

THE MEMORY OF THE DEAD

(1798)

WHO fears to speak of Ninety-Eight?

Who blushes at the name?

When cowards mock the patriot's fate,

Who hangs his head for shame?

He's all a knave or half a slave

5

Who slights his country thus:

But a true man, like you, man,

Will fill your glass with us.

We drink the memory of the brave,

The faithful and the few:

10

Some lie far off beyond the wave,

Some sleep in Ireland, too;

All, all are gone; but still lives on

The fame of those who died;

And true men, like you, men,

15

Remember them with pride.

They rose in dark and evil days

To right their native land;

They kindled here a living blaze

That nothing shall withstand.

20

Alas! that might can vanquish right—
They fell, and pass'd away;
But true men, like you, men,
Are plenty here to-day.

Then here 's their memory! may it be 25
For us a guiding light,
To cheer our strife for liberty
And teach us to unite.
Through good and ill be Ireland's still,
Though sad as theirs your fate; 30
And true men be you, men,
Like those of Ninety-Eight.

J. K. INGRAM.

THE BATTLE OF THE BALTIC

(1801)

The battle of Copenhagen was fought to break up Napoleon's plan of a coalition of the northern Powers against England. Nelson led the van of our ships, and when the battle was hottest refused to see Parker's signal for recall. The Danish fleet was broken up, but could not be taken owing to its being protected by the land batteries. Thanks, however, to the tactful negotiations of Nelson with the Danes, an armistice was agreed on, which led to a treaty with the northern Powers.

[See the plan in Gardiner's *Historical Atlas*.]

OF Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone,—
By each gun the lighted brand 6
In a bold determined hand;
And the Prince of all the land
Led them on.

Like leviathans afloat
Lay their bulwarks on the brine,
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line:
It was ten of April morn by the chime:
As they drifted on their path
There was silence deep as death,
And the boldest held his breath
For a time.

But the might of England flushed
To anticipate the scene;
And her van the fleetest rushed
O'er the deadly space between.
'Hearts of oak!' our captain cried; when each gun
From its adamant line
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

Again! again! again!
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back:
Their shots along the deep slowly boom;
Then ceased—and all is wail
As they strike the shattered sail,
Or in conflagration pale
Light the gloom.

Out spoke the victor then
As he hailed them o'er the wave,
'Ye are brothers! ye are men!
And we conquer but to save;
So peace instead of death let us bring:
But yield, proud foe, thy fleet
With the crews at England's feet,
And make submission meet
To our King.'

Then Denmark blessed our chief
 That he gave her wounds repose;
 And the sounds of joy and grief
 From her people wildly rose,
 As death withdrew his shades from the day;
 While the sun looked smiling bright 51
 O'er a wide and woeful sight,
 Where the fires of funeral light
 Died away.

Now joy, Old England, raise 55
 For the tidings of thy might
 By the festal cities' blaze,
 While the wine-cup shines in light;
 And yet, amidst that joy and uproar,
 Let us think of them that sleep, 60
 Full many a fathom deep,
 By thy wild and stormy steep,
 Elsinore!

Brave hearts! to Britain's pride
 Once so faithful and so true, 65
 On the deck of fame that died
 With the gallant good Riou—
 Soft sigh the winds of Heaven o'er their grave!
 While the billow mournful rolls
 And the mermaid's song condoles, 70
 Singing glory to the souls
 Of the brave!

T. CAMPBELL.

8. *Prince of all the land.* The Crown Prince of Denmark.
 63. *Elsinore.* Helsingfors, commanding the entrance to the Baltic.
 67. *Riou*, in command of the frigates, was killed during an attack on the land batteries.

SONNETS TO LIBERTY

(1802-6)

Wordsworth, like many other Englishmen, at first hailed the French Revolution with delight. As a young man he had come back to England in 1792 with a stone from the Bastille in his pocket, an ardent supporter of the revolutionaries.

'Oh! pleasant exercise of hope and joy!
For mighty were the auxiliars which then stood
Upon our side, we who were strong in love!
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven!—Oh! times,
In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
The attraction of a country in romance!
When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights,
When most intent on making of herself
A prime Enchantress—to assist the work
Which then was going forward in her name!'

But under the régime of the guillotine, and later when the Republic entered on a career of conquest, his attitude towards France changed.

i

This poem refers to the subjugation of Switzerland by Napoleon in 1803.

TWO Voices are there; one is of the sea,
One of the mountains; each a mighty Voice:
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty!
There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee 5
Thou fought'st against him; but hast vainly striven:
Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft:
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left; 10
For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be
That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful Voice be heard by thee.

The next four sonnets were composed in 1802, soon after the Peace of Amiens, when France was allowed by England and the Powers to keep nearly all she had gained by conquest.

O FRIEND! I know not which way I must look
 For comfort, being, as I am, oppressed,
 To think that now our life is only drest
 For show; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,
 Or groom!—We must run glittering like a brook;
 In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:
 The wealthiest man among us is the best:
 No grandeur now in nature or in book
 Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
 This is idolatry; and these we adore: 10
 Plain living and high thinking are no more:
 The homely beauty of the good old cause
 Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
 And pure religion breathing household laws.

MILTON! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
 England hath need of thee: she is a fen
 Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
 Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
 Have forfeited their ancient English dower 5
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
 Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
 And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
 Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
 Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free, 11
 So didst thou travel on life's common way,
 In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

GREAT men have been among us; hands that penned
 And tongues that uttered wisdom—better none:
 The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,
 Young Vane, and others who called Milton friend.
 These moralists could act and comprehend: 5
 They knew how genuine glory was put on;
 Taught us how rightfully a nation shone
 In splendour: what strength was, that would not
 bend

But in magnanimous meekness. France, 'tis strange,
 Hath brought forth no such souls as we had then. 10
 Perpetual emptiness! unceasing change!
 No single volume paramount, no code,
 No master spirit, no determined road;
 But equally a want of books and men!

3. *The later Sidney.* Algernon Sidney, who fought in the Civil War on the side of Parliament. In Charles II's reign he became the leader of the Whigs, and in 1683 he was unjustly executed for complicity in the Rye House Plot.

Marvel. (1621–78.) The poet and politician who assisted Milton in his secretaryship, and wrote the 'Horatian Ode' on Cromwell (p. 15).

Harrington. A political philosopher (*d.* 1677).

4. *Vane.* Sir Harry Vane, the leader of the Independents against the Presbyterians.

It is not to be thought of that the Flood
 Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
 Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
 Hath flowed, 'with pomp of waters, unwithstood,'
 Road by which all might come and go that would 5
 And bear out freights of worth to foreign lands.
 That this most famous Stream in bogs and sands
 Should perish; and to evil and to good
 Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
 Armoury of the invincible Knights of old: 10

We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held.—In every thing we are sprung
Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

4. '*with pomp*,' &c. From S. Daniel (1562-1619), *Civil War*, II. vii.

vi

Composed in 1806, after the battle of Jena.

By the crushing defeat of the Prussians at Jena so soon after Austerlitz, Napoleon was master of nearly the whole of Europe, and the Fourth Coalition was destroyed; next year Russia came to terms with Napoleon at Tilsit, and England stood alone.

ANOTHER year!—another deadly blow!
Another mighty Empire overthrown!
And We are left, or shall be left, alone;
The last that dare to struggle with the Foe.
'Tis well! from this day forward we shall know 5
That in ourselves our safety must be sought;
That by our own right hands it must be wrought;
That we must stand unproped or be laid low.
O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer!
We shall exult, if they who rule the land 10
Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
Wise, upright, valiant; not a servile band,
Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
And honour which they do not understand.

W. WORDSWORTH.

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM THE SEA

(1805)

NOBLY, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the North-
West died away;
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into
Cadiz Bay;
Bluish mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar
lay;
In the dimmest North-East distance, dawned Gibraltar
grand and gray;
'Here and here did England help me: how can I
help England?'—say,
Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise⁵
and pray,
While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.

R. BROWNING.

1. *Cape St. Vincent.* In 1797 Admiral Jervis's fleet attacked the Spaniards off Cape St. Vincent, and through the skill and gallantry of Nelson won a decisive victory.

2. *Cadiz Bay.* Cadiz was the headquarters of the French and Spanish fleets under Villeneuve during the naval operations of 1805 which ended in the Battle of Trafalgar. The allusion may be to Essex's attack on Cadiz in 1596.

4. *Gibraltar.* Besieged by the French, but, after a stubborn resistance, relieved in 1782 by Admiral Howe.

Where'er his country's foes were found,
Was heard the fated thunder's sound,
Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,
Roll'd, blaz'd, destroy'd,—and was no more. 25

Nor mourn ye less his perish'd worth
Who bade the conqueror go forth,
And launch'd that thunderbolt of war
On Egypt, Hafnia, Trafalgar ; 30
Who, born to guide such high emprise,
For Britain's weal was early wise ;
Alas! to whom the Almighty gave,
For Britain's sins, an early grave!
His worth who, in his mightiest hour, 35
A bauble held the pride of power,
Spurn'd at the sordid lust of pelf,
And serv'd his Albion for herself ;
Who, when the frantic crowd again
Strain'd at subjection's bursting rein, 40
O'er their wild mood full conquest gain'd,
The pride, he would not crush, restrain'd,
Show'd their fierce zeal a worthier cause,
And brought the freeman's arm to aid the freeman's
laws.

Had'st thou but liv'd, though stripp'd of power, 45
A watchman on the lonely tower,
Thy thrilling trump had rous'd the land,
When fraud or danger were at hand ;
By thee, as by the beacon-light,
Our pilots had kept course aright ; 50
As some proud column, though alone,
Thy strength had propp'd the tottering throne :
Now is the stately column broke,
The beacon-light is quench'd in smoke,
The trumpet's silver sound is still, 55
The warder silent on the hill !

Oh think, how to his latest day,
 When Death, just hovering, claim'd his prey,
 With Palinure's unalter'd mood,
 Firm at his dangerous post he stood; 60
 Each call for needful rest repell'd,
 With dying hand the rudder held,
 Till, in his fall, with fateful sway,
 The steerage of the realm gave way!
 Then, while on Britain's thousand plains, 65
 One unpolluted church remains,
 Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent around
 The bloody tocsin's maddening sound,
 But still, upon the hallow'd day,
 Convoke the swains to praise and pray; 70
 While faith and civil peace are dear,
 Grace this cold marble with a tear,—
 He, who preserved them, Pitt, lies here!

Nor yet suppress the generous sigh,
 Because his rival slumbers nigh; 75
 Nor be thy *requiescat* dumb,
 Lest it be said o'er Fox's tomb.
 For talents mourn, untimely lost,
 When best employ'd, and wanted most;
 Mourn genius high, and lore profound, 80
 And wit that lov'd to play, not wound;
 And all the reasoning powers divine,
 To penetrate, resolve, combine;
 And feelings keen, and fancy's glow,—
 They sleep with him who sleeps below: 85
 And, if thou mourn'st they could not save
 From error him who owns this grave,
 Be every harsher thought suppress'd,
 And sacred be the last long rest.
 Here, where the end of earthly things 90
 Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and kings;
 Where stiff the hand, and still the tongue,
 Of those who fought, and spoke, and sung;

Here, where the fretted aisles prolong
 The distant notes of holy song, 95
 As if some angel spoke agen,
 'All peace on earth, good-will to men ;'
 If ever from an English heart,
 O, *here* let prejudice depart,
 And, partial feeling cast aside, 100
 Record, that Fox a Briton died !
 When Europe crouch'd to France's yoke,
 And Austria bent, and Prussia broke,
 And the firm Russian's purpose brave,
 Was barter'd by a timorous slave, 105
 Even then dishonour's peace he spurn'd,
 The sullied olive-branch return'd,
 Stood for his country's glory fast,
 And nail'd her colours to the mast !
 Heaven, to reward this firmness, gave 110
 A portion in this honour'd grave,
 And ne'er held marble in its trust,
 Of two such wondrous men the dust.

SIR W. SCOTT (from *Marmion*).

14. *Nelson's shrine*. In St. Paul's Cathedral.
 20. *on Gadite wave*, i. e. at the battle of Trafalgar, which is not far from Cadiz (L. *Gades*).
 30. *On Egypt*. At the Battle of the Nile, 1798.
Hafnia. Copenhagen (1801).
 32. *early wise*. Pitt the younger was Prime Minister at twenty-four. Both father and son died poor men, in spite of many opportunities their position gave them for gaining wealth.
 The next few lines refer to Pitt's stern treatment of agitators in England during the French Revolution, and his plan for the defence of England when invasion was threatened.
 38. *Albion*. England.
 59. *Palinure*. The steersman who refused to give up the helm to the god of sleep. Virgil, *Aeneid*, v. 854.
 68. *tocsin's*. The tocsin is an alarm-bell rung as a call to arms.
 76. *requiescat (in pace)*. May he rest in peace. A prayer often written on tombstones.

102. *When Europe crouched.* Fox, a consistent supporter of Liberty and the French Revolution, took office after Pitt's death. Finding it impossible to come to terms with Napoleon and save Europe, he carried on the war just as vigorously as Pitt had done.

103. *Austria bent.* A reference to the defeat of the Austrians by Napoleon at the battle of Austerlitz in 1805, which destroyed the Third Coalition.

Prussia broke. After the battle of Jena in 1806. (See introduction to 'Sonnets to Liberty—vi, After Jena', p. 51).

105. *timorous slave.* The Czar, Alexander I, came to terms with Napoleon at the Treaty of Tilsit, 1807.

TO THOMAS CLARKSON

(1807)

Clarkson spent practically all his life in working for the abolition of the slave trade. Wilberforce was the main mover in the Commons, but Clarkson gave him the facts with which he was able to convince Parliament of the horrors of the traffic.

CLARKSON! it was an obstinate hill to climb:
How toilsome—nay, how dire—it was, by thee
Is known; by none, perhaps, so feelingly
But thou, who, starting in thy fervent prime,
Didst first lead forth that enterprise sublime, 5
Hast heard the constant Voice its charge repeat,
Which, out of thy young heart's oracular seat,
First roused thee.—O true yoke-fellow of Time,
Duty's intrepid liegeman, see, the palm
Is won, and by all Nations shall be worn! 10
The blood-stained Writing is for ever torn;
And thou henceforth wilt have a good man's calm,
A great man's happiness; thy zeal shall find
Repose at length, firm friend of human kind!

W. WORDSWORTH.

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE

(1809)

Moore was commander-in-chief of the British troops in the Peninsular War during Wellington's absence, and was ordered by the Ministry, who were quite ignorant of the difficulties of the task and the forces at his disposal, to drive the French out of Spain. Moore had to retreat on Corunna, followed first by Napoleon and then by Soult. He was forced to fight in order to secure the embarkation of his troops, and won a brilliant victory at Corunna, though he himself was killed. Napoleon said, 'Moore is the only General fit to contend with me'; Soult raised a monument to him on the battle-field; but the Ministry and Government officials at home tried to hide their incompetence by throwing the blame on the dead soldier.

[See Sir William Butler's *Sir Charles Napier*, pp. 27-38.]

NOT a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning,
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light
And the lanthorn dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him; 10
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow. 16

We thought, as we hollow'd his narrow bed
And smooth'd down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his
head,

And we far away on the billow! 20

Lightly-they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him—
But little he'll reckon, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done 25
When the clock struck the hour for retiring;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory; 30
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone with his glory.

C. WOLFE.

THE FIELD OF TALAVERA

(1809)

Talavera was one of the most important and hardly contested battles of the Peninsular War. After two days' fighting Wellington had the victory, but his troops were too exhausted to pursue.

[Talavera town, on the river Tagus, is at the extreme right of the foreground; a mountain range on the extreme left.

The allied army under Sir Arthur Wellesley stretches between—the English on the left, the Spanish on the right—part holding a hill to the left-centre of the scene, divided from the mountains by a valley, and part holding a redoubt to the right-

8. redoubt] outwork.

centre. This army of more than fifty thousand all told, of which twenty-two thousand only are English, has its back to the spectator.

11

Beyond, in a wood of olive, oak, and cork, are the fifty to sixty thousand French, facing the spectator and the allies. Their right includes a strong battery upon a hill which fronts the one on the English left.

Behind all, the heights of Salinas close the prospect, the small river Alberche flowing at their foot from left to right into the Tagus, which advances in foreshortened perspective to the town at the right front corner of the scene as aforesaid.]

20

DUMB SHOW.

[The hot and dusty July afternoon having turned to twilight, shady masses of men start into motion from the French position, come towards the foreground, silently ascend the hill on the left of the English, and assail the latter in a violent outburst of fire and lead. They nearly gain possession of the hill assailed.]

26

CHORUS OF RUMOURS.

*Ten of the night is Talavera tolling:
Now do Ruffin's ranks come surging upward,
Backed by bold Vilatte's. Lapsse from the vale, too,
Darkly upswells there!—*

30

*Downhill from the crest the English fling them,
And with their bayonets roll the enemy backward:
So the first fierce charge of the ardent Frenchmen
England repels there!*

34

[Having fallen back into the darkness the French presently reascend in yet larger masses. The high square knapsack which every English foot-soldier carries, and his shako, and its tuft, outline themselves against the dim light as the ranks stand awaiting the shock.]

40

38. shako] peaked cap.

CHORUS OF RUMOURS.

*Pushing they spread, and shout as they reach the
summit,*

*Strength and stir new-primed in their plump
battalions:*

*Puffs of flame blown forth on the lines opposing
Higher and higher.*

*There those hold them mute, though at speaking
distance—*

*Mute, while the clicking flints, and the crash of
the volley*

*Throw on the weighted gloom an immense dis-
traction*

Pending their fire.

*Fronting visages each ranksman reads there,
Epaulettes, and cheeks, and shining eyeballs, 45
(Called from the dark a trice by the fleeting pan-
flash)*

Pressing them nigher!

[The French again fall back in disorder into the hollow, and Lapisse draws off on the right. As the sinking sound of the muskets tells what has happened the English raise a shout.] 56

CHORUS OF PITIES.

*Thus the dim nocturnal voice of the conflict
Closes with the receding roar of the gun-fire.*

*Harness loosened then, and their day-long strenuous
Strain unbending, 60*

*Worn out lines lie down where they late stood
staunchly—*

*Cloaks around them rolled—by the bivouac embers:
There to pursue at dawn the dynasts' death-game
Unto the ending!*

T. HARDY (from *The Dynasts*).

46. *flints.* The muskets used in the Peninsular War were fitted with flints. Percussion caps had not yet been invented.

WATERLOO

(1815)

This extract from *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* was written almost within a year of the battle, when the 'spot was marked with no colossal bust'. (The 'mound' was not put there till 1823.) The famous ball given by the Duchess of Richmond has been described by many who were present.

[See Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (chaps. xxix-xxxi), for an account of the scene of panic in Brussels.]

THERE was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when 5
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising
knell!

Did ye not hear it?—No; 't was but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street; 11
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
But hark! that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat; 16
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

Within a window'd niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear 20
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;

And when they smiled because he deem'd it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretch'd his father on a bloody bier, 25
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell;
He rush'd into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago 30
Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes, 35
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could
rise!

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war; 40
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—'The foe! they
come! they come!' 45

And wild and high the 'Cameron's gathering' rose!
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes:—
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers 51
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's
ears!

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
 Dewy with nature's tear-drops as they pass, 56
 Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
 Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
 Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
 Which now beneath them, but above shall grow 60
 In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
 Of living valour, rolling on the foe
 And burning with high hope shall moulder cold and
 low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
 Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay, 65
 The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
 The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
 Battle's magnificently stern array!
 The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
 The earth is cover'd thick with other clay, 70
 Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
 Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial
 blent!

LORD BYRON (from *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*).

20. *Brunswick's fated chieftain*. The Duke of Brunswick's father was killed at Auerbach, 1792; he himself at Quatre Bras at the very beginning of the battle.

46. *gathering*. The signal for the clan to assemble: generally a distinctive call on the bagpipes.

47. *Lochiel*. The name borne by the chief of the Cameron clan. John Cameron was killed at Quatre Bras, two days before Waterloo, while leading the 92nd Highlanders.

Albyn's. England's.

54. *Evan, Donald*. Evan Cameron fought with Dundee at Killicrankie, charging at the head of his clan; Donald Cameron at Culloden.

55. *Ardennes*, sc. the forest of.

LIBERTY AND AMERICA

(1817)

The fall of Napoleon, instead of inaugurating an era of liberty in Europe, served but to restore the monarchical régime. The sovereigns of Russia, Austria, and Prussia formed a *Holy Alliance*, to establish absolutism at home, and to crush popular agitation elsewhere.

CAN tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be,
And Freedom find no champion and no child
Such as Columbia saw arise when she
Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and undefiled?
Or must such minds be nourish'd in the wild,
Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the roar
Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled
On infant Washington? Has Earth no more
Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such
shore?

LORD BYRON (from *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*).

3. *Columbia*. The United States of America.

4. *Pallas*. The virgin goddess, who sprang armed from the head of Zeus. So in the American Rebellion the Colonists, who were a nation of farmers and traders, quickly proved themselves to be a match for the regular troops of England.

8. *Washington*. Born in Virginia in 1732. His early life was spent almost entirely in the backwoods.

ENGLAND IN 1819

This sonnet is no exaggeration of the state of the country in 1819. Bad trade and heavy taxation produced riots which were often put down by the military with bloodshed. Lord Castlereagh had suppressed the right of free speech. George III had been insane for years. The Regent was a drunkard and a gambler. And Parliament was still unreformed and unrepresentative of the nation.

AN old, mad, blind, despised, and dying king,—
Princes, the dregs of their dull race, who flow
Through public scorn,—mud from a muddy spring,—
Rulers who neither see, nor feel, nor know,
But leech-like to their fainting country cling, 5
Till they drop, blind in blood, without a blow,—
A people starved and stabbed in the untilled field,—
An army, which liberticide and prey
Makes as a two-edged sword to all who wield,—
Golden and sanguine laws which tempt and slay; 10
Religion Christless, Godless—a book sealed;
A Senate,—Time's worst statute unrepealed,—
Are graves, from which a glorious Phantom may
Burst, to illumine our tempestuous day.

P. B. SHELLEY.

BUONAPARTE

(1821)

Napoleon died a prisoner at St. Helena in 1821.

HE thought to quell the stubborn hearts of oak,
Madman!—to chain with chains, and bind with bands
That island queen that sways the floods and lands
From Ind to Ind, but in fair daylight woke,
When from her wooden walls, lit by sure hands, 5
With thunders, and with lightnings, and with smoke,
Peal after peal, the British battle broke,
Lulling the brine against the Coptic sands.
We taught him lowlier moods, when Elsinore
Heard the war moan along the distant sea, 10
Rocking with shattered spars, with sudden fires
Flamed over: at Trafalgar yet once more
We taught him: late he learned humility
Perforce, like those whom Gideon school'd with
briers.

LORD TENNYSON.

8. *The Coptic sands.* The battle of the Nile, 1798, when Nelson destroyed the French fleet, and ruined Napoleon's designs on Egypt and India.

9. *Elsinore.* The battle of the Baltic, 1801, when Nelson forced Denmark to allow English trade to pass into the Baltic.

14. *Gideon.* The men of Succoth would not give bread to Gideon's men when they were faint with hunger in pursuing Zeba and Zalmunna. After his victory he took thorns and briers and 'taught the men of Succoth' (Judges viii. 16).

NAPOLEON

(1821)

This ode of Shelley's, written immediately after Napoleon's death, anticipates with singular accuracy the verdict of modern history upon Napoleon, as a vast natural force, fraught alike with good and with evil, sweeping 'like a rushing mighty wind' through the effete monarchies of Western Europe. [See Lord Rosebery's 'Napoleon: the Last Phase', *ad finem*.]

WHAT! alive and so bold, O Earth?
Art thou not overbold?
What! leapest thou forth as of old
In the light of thy morning mirth,
The last of the flock of the starry fold? 5
Ha! leapest thou forth as of old?
Are not the limbs still when the ghost is fled,
And canst thou move, Napoleon being dead?

How! is not thy quick heart cold?
What spark is alive on thy hearth? 10
How! is not *his* death-knell knolled?
And livest *thou* still, Mother Earth?
Thou wert warming thy fingers old
O'er the embers covered and cold
Of that most fiery spirit, when it fled— 15
What, Mother, do you laugh now he is dead?

'Who has known me of old,' replied Earth,
'Or who has my story told?
It is thou who art overbold.'
And the lightning of scorn laughed forth 20
As she sung, 'To my bosom I fold
All my sons when their knell is knolled,
And so with living motion all are fed,
And the quick spring like weeds out of the dead.

'Still alive and still bold,' shouted Earth, 25
 'I grow bolder and still more bold.
 The dead fill me ten thousandfold
 Fuller of speed, and splendour, and mirth.
 I was cloudy, and sullen, and cold,
 Like a frozen chaos uprolled, 30
 Till by the spirit of the mighty dead
 My heart grew warm. I feed on whom I fed.

'Ay, alive and still bold,' muttered Earth,
 'Napoleon's fierce spirit rolled,
 In terror and blood and gold, 35
 A torrent of ruin to death from his birth.
 Leave the millions who follow to mould
 The metal before it be cold;
 And weave into his shame, which like the dead
 Shrouds me, the hopes that from his glory fled.' 40

P. B. SHELLEY.

BATTLE SONG

(1832)

The struggle which this poem invokes is the legislative campaign in which Parliament was engaged after the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832. Within three years it carried the act for the emancipation of slaves, a reform of the Poor Law, and the Municipal Corporations Reform Act.

DAY, like our souls, is fiercely dark;
 What then? 'Tis day!
 We sleep no more; the cock crows—hark!
 To arms! away!
 They come! they come! the knell is rung 5
 Of us or them;
 Wide o'er their march the pomp is flung
 Of gold and gem.

What collar'd hound of lawless sway,	
To famine dear—	10
What pension'd slave of Attila,	
Leads in the rear?	
Come they from Scythian wilds afar,	
Our blood to spill?	
Wear they the livery of the Czar?	15
They do his will.	
Nor tassell'd silk, nor epaulet,	
Nor plume, nor torse—	
No splendour gilds, all sternly met,	
Our foot and horse.	20
But, dark and still, we inly glow,	
Condensed in ire!	
Strike, tawdry slaves, and ye shall know	
Our gloom is fire.	
In vain your pomp, ye evil powers,	25
Insults the land;	
Wrongs, vengeance, and the Cause are ours,	
And God's right hand!	
Madmen! they trample into snakes	
The wormy clod!	30
Like fire, beneath their feet awakes	
The sword of God!	
Behind, before, above, below	
They rouse the brave;	
Where'er they go, they make a foe,	35
Or find a grave.	

E. ELLIOTT.

11. *Attila*. King of the Huns, 'the Scourge of God,' in 450 attacked and laid waste Northern Italy.

18. torse] breast-plate.

O LORD, HOW LONG

(1840)

Ebenezer Elliott, the poet of the Anti-Corn Law League, thought that opposition to the bread-taxes and amelioration in the conditions of labour were the most important aims for the working classes of the first half of the nineteenth century. He lived just long enough to see them abolished in 1846.

Up, widow, up, and swing the fly;
Or push the grating file!
Our bread is tax'd, and rents are high,
That wolves may burst with bile.
Sire of the hopeless! canst thou sleep? 5
Up, up, and toil for ghould,
Who drink our tears, but never weep,
And soulless eat our souls!

Child, what hast thou with sleep to do?
Awake, and dry thine eyes! 10
Thy tiny hands must labour too;
Our bread is tax'd—arise!
Arise, and toil long hours twice seven,
For pennies two or three;
Thy woes make angels weep in Heaven,— 15
But England still is free.

Up, weary man, of eighty-five,
And toil in hopeless woe!
Our bread is tax'd, our rivals thrive,
Our gods will have it so. 20
Yet God is undethron'd on high,
And undethroned will be:
Father of all! hear Thou our cry,
And England *shall* be free.

Methinks, thy nation-wedding waves 25
 Upbraid us as they flow ;
 Thy winds, disdaining fetter'd slaves,
 Reproach us as they blow ;
 Methinks thy bolts are waxing hot,
 Thy clouds have voices too ; 30
 'Father!' they cry, 'hast thou forgót
 Land-butcher'd Peterloo ?'

Oh, Vengeance!—No, forgive, forgive !
 'Tis frailty still that errs :
 Forgive?—Revenge! Shall murderers live? 35
 Christ bless'd *His* murderers.
 Father, we only ask our own ;
 We say, 'Be commerce free ;
 Let barter have his mutton-bone,
 Let toil be liberty.' 40

They smite in vain who smite with swords,
 And scourge with volleyed fire ;
 Our weapon is the whip of words,
 And truth's all-teaching ire ;
 The blow it gives, the wound it makes, 45
 Life yet unborn shall see,
 And shake it, like a whip of snakes,
 At unborn villainy.

E. ELLIOTT.

1. *Up, widow, up.* Women at this time were employed in factories both night and day. Lord Shaftesbury's Act of 1844 limited their hours to twelve, and those of children under thirteen to six per day.

the fly. The shuttle, then thrown to and fro by hand.

32. *Peterloo.* The 'Manchester Massacre' of 1819, when a meeting of reformers in St. Peter's fields was broken up by the military with unnecessary violence.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

(1852)

Wellington's military career ended in 1815, and the rest of his long life was devoted to politics. Though he incurred great unpopularity by his attitude towards reform in 1831, his honesty of purpose gained him towards the end respect and affection.

The long funeral procession through London to St. Paul's was one of the most remarkable spectacles of the nineteenth century.

WHO is he that cometh, like an honour'd guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier and with
priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest?
Mighty Seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea. 5
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,
The greatest sailor since our world began.
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes;
For this is he 10
Was great by land as thou by sea;
His foes were thine; he kept us free;
O give him welcome, this is he
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee; 15
For this is England's greatest son,
He that gain'd a hundred fights,
Nor ever lost an English gun;
This is he that far away
Against the myriads of Assaye 20
Clash'd with his fiery few and won;
And underneath another sun,
Warring on a later day,

Round affrighted Lisbon drew
 The treble works, the vast designs 25
 Of his labour'd rampart-lines,
 Where he greatly stood at bay,
 Whence he issued forth anew,
 And ever great and greater grew,
 Beating from the wasted vines 30
 Back to France her banded swarms,
 Back to France with countless blows,
 Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
 Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
 Follow'd up in valley and glen 35
 With blare of bugle, clamour of men,
 Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
 And England pouring on her foes.
 Such a war had such a close.
 Again their ravening eagle rose 40
 In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings,
 And barking for the thrones of kings;
 Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
 On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler down;
 A day of onsets of despair! 45
 Dash'd on every rocky square
 Their surging charges foam'd themselves away;
 Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;
 Thro' the long-tormented air
 Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray, 50
 And down we swept and charged and overthrew.
 So great a soldier taught us there,
 What long-enduring hearts could do
 In that world's-earthquake, Waterloo!
 Mighty Seaman, tender and true, 55
 And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
 O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
 O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
 If aught of things that here befall
 Touch a spirit among things divine, 60
 If love of country move thee there at all,
 Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine!

And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
In full acclaim
A people's voice, 65
The proof and echo of all human fame,
A people's voice, when they rejoice
At civic revel and pomp and game,
Attest their great commander's claim
With honour, honour, honour, honour to him, 70
Eternal honour to his name.

LORD TENNYSON.

4. *Mighty Seaman*. Nelson, who is also buried in St. Paul's Cathedral.

20. *Assaye*. Where in 1803 against enormous odds Wellington had crushed the power of the Mahrattas.

25. *treble works*. The famous lines of Torres Vedras, where during the winter of 1810-11 Wellington had kept at bay a superior army under Masséna.

44. *that loud sabbath*. Waterloo was fought on a Sunday.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

(1854)

The scene of this disastrous exploit was Balaclava, which was the port of supplies for the English and French during the Crimean War. Out of the 673 men who rode into the valley to charge artillery in position, only about 200 came back uninjured. 'C'est magnifique,' said the French general, 'mais ce n'est pas la guerre.'

How the blunder arose will never be known. The best account is to be found in Kinglake's *Invasion of the Crimea*, vol. v of the Cabinet Edition.

HALF a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

'Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!' he said;
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

5

'Forward, the Light Brigade!'
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd:
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

10

15

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them,
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

20

25

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air,
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd:
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not,
Not the six hundred.

30

35

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them

40

Volley'd and thunder'd ;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

45

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!

50

All the world wonder'd.
Honour the charge they made!
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!

55

LORD TENNYSON.

5. *the Light Brigade* consisted of the 5th and 11th Hussars
and the 17th Lancers.

6. *he.* Lord Cardigan, in command of the Brigade.

THE PIPES AT LUCKNOW

(1857)

The siege of the Residency of Lucknow by the Sepoys had lasted three months before Havelock and Outram succeeded in relieving it. (The siege was not finally raised till six months later by Sir Colin Campbell.)

PIPES of the misty moorlands,
Voice of the glens and hills;
The droning of the torrents,
The treble of the rills!
Not the braes of broom and heather, 5
Nor the mountains dark with rain,
Nor maiden bower, nor border tower,
Have heard your sweetest strain!

Dear to the Lowland reaper,
And plaided mountaineer,— 10
To the cottage and the castle
The Scottish pipes are dear;—
Sweet sounds the ancient pibroch,
O'er mountain, loch, and glade;
But the sweetest of all music 15
The pipes at Lucknow played.

Day by day the Indian tiger
Louder yelled, and nearer crept;
Round and round the jungle-serpent
Near and nearer circles swept. 20
'Pray for rescue, wives and mothers,—
Pray to-day!' the soldier said;
'To-morrow, death's between us
And the wrong and shame we dread.'

Oh, they listened, looked, and waited, 25
Till their hope became despair;
And the sobs of low bewailing
Filled the pauses of their prayer.
Then up spake a Scottish maiden,
With her ear unto the ground: 30
'Dinna ye hear it?—dinna ye hear it?
The pipes o' Havelock sound!'

Hushed the wounded man his groaning;
Hushed the wife her little ones;
Alone they heard the drum-roll 35
And the roar of Sepoy guns.
But to sounds of home and childhood
The Highland ear was true;—
As her mother's cradle-crooning
The mountain pipes she knew. 40

Like the march of soundless music
Through the vision of the seer,
More of feeling than of hearing,
Of the heart than of the ear,
She knew the droning pibroch, 45
She knew the Campbell's call:
'Hark! hear ye no' MacGregor's,
The grandest o' them all!'

Oh, they listened, dumb and breathless,
And they caught the sound at last; 50
Faint and far beyond the Goomtee
Rose and fell the piper's blast!
Then a burst of wild thanksgiving
Mingled woman's voice and man's;
'God be praised!—the march of Havelock! 55
The piping of the clans!'

Louder, nearer, fierce as vengeance,
Sharp and shrill as swords at strife,
Came the wild MacGregor's clan-call,
Stinging all the air to life. 60

But when the far-off dust-cloud
To plaided legions grew,
Full tenderly and blithesomely
The pipes of rescue blew!

Round the silver domes of Lucknow, 65
Moslem mosque and Pagan shrine,
Breathed the air to Britons dearest,
The air of Auld Lang Syne.
O'er the cruel roll of war-drums
Rose that sweet and home-like strain; 70
And the tartan clove the turban,
As the Goomtee cleaves the plain.

Dear to the corn-land reaper
And plaided mountaineer,—
To the cottage and the castle 75
The piper's song is dear.
Sweet sounds the Gaelic pibroch
O'er mountain, glen, and glade,
But the sweetest of all music
The Pipes at Lucknow played! 80

J. G. WHITTIER.

17. *the Indian tiger*, i. e. the Sepoys. [See Tenniel's famous cartoon of the time in *Punch*.]

45-6. Each clan has its own 'pibroch' or distinguishing piece of music, which is played on the bagpipes.

51. *Goomtee*. A tributary of the Ganges.

HAVELOCK

(1857)

General Sir Henry Havelock died of dysentery in Lucknow two months after he had relieved the Residency.

[See Forbes's 'Sir Henry Havelock', in *English Men of Action* Series.]

HE is gone. Heaven's will is best,
 India turf o'erlies his breast,
 Ghoul in black, nor fool in gold
 Laid him in yon hallowed mould.
 Guarded to a soldier's grave 5
 By the bravest of the brave
 He hath gained a nobler tomb
 Than in old cathedral gloom,
 Nobler mourners paid the rite
 Than the crowd that craves a sight, 10
 England's banners o'er him waved—
 Dead he keeps the realm he saved.
 Strew not on the hero's hearse
 Garlands of a herald's verse;
 Let us hear no words of fame 15
 Sounding loud a deathless name;
 Tell us of no vauntful glory
 Shouting forth her haughty story.
 All life long his homage rose
 To far other shrine than those. 20
 'IN HOC SIGNO', pale nor dim,
 Lit the battlefield for him,
 And the prize he sought and won
 Was the Crown for Duty done.

S. BROOKS.

22. *In hoc signo. Sc. vinces.* 'By this sign shalt thou conquer.' In 312 Constantine, before a battle, saw a cross in the heavens bearing this inscription; he emblazoned it on his banner, and gained a complete victory. The apparition is celebrated in the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.

THE WAR

(1859)

In 1858 an attempt was made on Napoleon III's life by Orsini and others. It was well known that these men had come from London, where they had made all their plans and manufactured their bombs. The indignation in France led Napoleon to publish a letter from French officers demanding to be led against 'the land that sheltered monsters'. The reply in England was the formation of the Volunteer Rifle Corps, now merged in the Territorial Army.

THERE is a sound of thunder afar,
Storm in the south that darkens the day,
Storm of battle and thunder of war,
Well, if it do not roll our way.

Storm! storm! Riflemen form! 5
Ready, be ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!

Be not deaf to the sound that warns!
Be not gull'd by a despot's plea!
Are figs of thistles, or grapes of thorns? 10
How should a despot set men free?

Form! form! Riflemen form!
Ready, be ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!

Let your Reforms for a moment go, 15
Look to your butts, and take good aims.
Better a rotten borough or so,
Than a rotten fleet or a city in flames!

Form! form! Riflemen form!
Ready, be ready to meet the storm! 20
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!

Form, be ready to do or die!

Form in Freedom's name and the Queen's!

True, that we have a faithful ally,

But only the Devil knows what he means. 25

Form! form! Riflemen form!

Ready, be ready to meet the storm!

Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!

LORD TENNYSON.

17. *rotten borough*. A reference to the agitation for Reform in the representation of boroughs, which was defeated in 1859 but carried in 1867.

THE WHITE PACHA

, (1885)

Charles George Gordon was commander of the Chinese Army that crushed the Taiping Rebellion in 1862. He was afterwards Governor-General of the Sudan, where he put down the slave trade. In 1884 he volunteered to go to the Sudan again to bring away the garrisons that were being besieged by the Mahdi. He was, however, hemmed in at Khartoum, and killed by the Mahdi's followers before the relief expedition sent from England could reach him. [See Punch's cartoon for February 14, 1885 — 'Too Late!']

No man ever exercised so great an influence on either Chinese or Sudanese as General Gordon. [The best biography is that by Sir William Butler, in *English Men of Action* Series.]

VAIN is the dream! However Hope may rave,
He perished with the folk he could not save,
And though none surely told us he is dead,
And though perchance another in his stead,
Another, not less brave, when all was done, 5
Had fled unto the southward and the sun,
Had urged a way by force, or won by guile
To streams remotest of the secret Nile,

Had raised an army of the Desert men,
 And, waiting for his hour, had turned again 10
 And fallen on that False Prophet, yet we know
 Gordon is dead, and these things are not so!
 Nay, not for England's cause, nor to restore
 Her trampled flag—for he loved Honour more—
 Nay, not for Life, Revenge, or Victory, 15
 Would he have fled, whose hour had dawned to die.
 He will not come again, whate'er our need,
 He will not come, who is happy, being freed
 From the deathly flesh and perishable things,
 And lies of statesmen and rewards of kings. 20
 Nay, somewhere by the sacred River's shore
 He sleeps like those that shall return no more,
 No more return for all the prayers of men—
 Arthur and Charles—they never come again!
 They shall not wake, though fair the vision seem: 25
 Whate'er sick Hope may whisper, vain the dream!

A. LANG.

21. *sacred River's shore.* Khartoum is at the junction of the Blue and White Nile, the sacred river of the Egyptians.

24. *Arthur.* King Arthur. There was a tradition that after 'healing of his grievous wound' he would come again. According to Malory the inscription on his tomb was:—'Here lies Arthur, erstwhile king, and king to be.'

Charles. Charlemagne (d. 814), the king of the Franks, of whom it was also said that he would return from the dead.

ADVANCE, AUSTRALIA

(1885)

This poem refers to the offer of help made by the Australians after the fall of Khartoum.

SONS of the giant Ocean isle
In sport our friendly foes for long,
Well England loves you, and we smile
When you outmatch us many a while,
So fleet you are, so keen and strong. 5

You, like that fairy people set
Of old in their enchanted sea
Far off from men, might well forget
An elder nation's toil and fret,
Might heed not aught but game and glee. 10

But what your fathers were you are
In lands the fathers never knew,
'Neath skies of alien sign and star
You rally to the English war;
Your hearts are English, kind and true. 15

And now, when first on England falls
The shadow of a darkening fate,
You hear the Mother e'er she calls,
You leave your ocean-girdled walls,
And face her foemen in the gate. 20

A. LANG.

RECESSIONAL.

(1897)

This poem was written on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the accession of Victoria.

GOD of our fathers, known of old—
Lord of our far-flung battle-line—
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget, lest we forget!

5

The tumult and the shouting dies—
The captains and the kings depart—
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget, lest we forget!

10

Far-call'd our navies melt away—
On dune and headland sinks the fire—
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget, lest we forget!

15

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe—
Such boasting as the Gentiles use
Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget, lest we forget!

21

For heathen heart that puts her trust 23
 In reeking tube and iron shard—
 All valiant dust that builds on dust,
 And guarding calls not Thee to guard—
 For frantic boast and foolish word,
 Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord! R. KIPLING.

A Recessional is the hymn sung as the clergy and choir leave the chancel.

16. *Nineveh*. The ancient capital of Assyria, now in ruins.

Tyre. Formerly one of the chief ports of the Phœnician empire.

21. *Gentiles*. The word used in the Old Testament for all peoples who did not follow the law of Moses; here applied to nations which glory in their power without keeping before them the ideals which should sanctify the possession of empire.

ODE ON THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE (1898)

Gladstone was the leader of the Liberal party for nearly thirty years. His chief political work was the disestablishment of the Irish Church, the enfranchisement of the agricultural labourer, and his attempt to settle the grievances of Ireland.

The poem calls attention to his eloquence, his scholarship, his piety, his sympathy with the oppressed of all nations. [See Morley's *Life of Gladstone*.]

GIVE thanks to God! our Hero is at rest
 Who more than all hath laboured, striven, aspired;
 And now hath won his sleep—the last—the best
 His soul desired.

Now, though the warlike rumours swiftly run, 5
 Though mighty nations toss in fierce unrest,
 Though the harsh thunder of the throbbing gun
 Roars in the West,

Here all is still: beneath his castle walls
 Sprouts blade, and bush, and every tender thing, 10
 And hark, the jocund throstle! how she calls
 To Hope and Spring!

26. shard] fragment of a shell.

11. jocund] merry. throstle] thrush.

Peace on the smitten hearts that sorrow near!
Now that the toil-worn warrior sinks to sleep,
The nations listen, half afraid to hear
A nation weep; 15

And patriots weep, strong souls on alien shores,
And men whose feet with saving peace are shod,
And every heart that silently adores
Freedom and God. 20

Freedom and God!—these first—but still he served
All peaceful labours, and the world's strong youth;
Yet in the wildest onset, never swerved
From sternest truth.

The fight he scorned not; 'twas the prize he scorned!
He chose the scars and not the gauds of fame, 25
Gave crowns to others, keeping unadorned
His homely name,

Spring after spring, beneath the budding elm,
Not worn with toil, yet joyful in release, 30
He shook the dust of battle from his helm,
And practised peace.

Intent for rest—as he had hardly fought—
Hid from the world, the uproar and the fret,
Plunged in an instant in serener thought, 35
He could forget!

While yet his words made havoc of men's fears,
And thrilled reverberant through the spell-bound
throng,
Smiling he slept from empire, to the years
Through Time, through song 40

Immortal made, old knights and spouses true;
And far as his enkindled eyes could scan,
He shot his arrowy thought, and pierced, and knew
The soul of man.

Or in the village temple, morn by morn, 45
He cleansed his pure heart with a humble prayer,
And rose on Zion's songs, beyond the bourne
Of earthly care;

And last the Father willed one pang of love,
From wisdom's fiercest fire, one glowing coal 50
Should touch his lips, to chasten and to prove
The stainless soul.

Swift, swift was patience perfect: where he lay,
What heart could fail, what lips could murmur then?
He whispered, 'twixt the darkness and the day, 55
His faint Amen.

Eton remember! How shall men forget
Thy heroes' roll, thy burden of renown,
The bright surpassing jewels strongly set
Within thy crown, 60

Till God's vast purpose silently enfold
The thoughts that are not and the things that are,
Till mercy reign, in gentle glory rolled
From star to star?

Not mighty deeds, in keenest foresight planned, 65
Strong words, sweet motions of bewildering grace,
Not these receive at God's all-judging Hand
The loftiest place,

But they who keep, through warfare and through ease,
Tho' praise, tho' hate about their name be blown,
The childlike heart, the childlike faith—for these
Are next the Throne. 72

A. C. BENSON.

5. *warlike rumours*. In 1898 Spain and the United States were at war; England and France were quarrelling over the Sudan; and trouble was brewing in South Africa.

9. *castle walls*. At Hawarden.

39. *Smiling, &c.* He stepped from the arena of politics to the years of long ago made immortal by song, to the stories of old knights, &c. A reference to his interest in Homer.

EMBARCATION

(1899)

A transport is supposed to be leaving Southampton Docks for the Boer War.

HERE, where Vespasian's legions struck the sands,
And Cerdic with his Saxons entered in,
And Henry's army leapt afloat to win
Convincing triumphs over neighbour lands,

Vaster battalions press for further strands, 5
To argue in the self-same bloody mode
Which this late age of thought, and pact, and code,
Still fails to mend.—Now deckward tramp the bands,

Yellow as autumn leaves, alive as spring;
And as each host draws out upon the sea 10
Beyond which lies the tragical To-be,
None dubious of the cause, none murmuring,

Wives, sisters, parents, wave white hands and smile,
As if they know not that they weep the while.

T. HARDY.

1. *Vespasian*. Afterwards Emperor, landed in Britain in A.D. 43. He fought many battles with the Britons and conquered the Isle of Wight.

2. *Cerdic*. King of the West Saxons in 519, came to Hampshire in 495. He and his son made a complete conquest of the Isle of Wight in 530.

3. *Henry's army*. Henry V set sail from Southampton to lay siege to Harfleur.

9. *yellow as autumn, &c.* A reference to the khaki dress of the soldiers.

ENGLAND STANDS ALONE

(1900)

At the time of the last Boer War, it is no exaggeration to say that not one European country was friendly to England: 'England stands alone' was the remark of a German newspaper of the time.

'SHE stands alone: ally nor friend has she,'
Saith Europe of our England—her who bore
Drake, Blake, and Nelson—Warrior-Queen who wore
Light's conquering glaive that strikes the conquered
free.

Alone!—From Canada comes o'er the sea, 5
And from that English coast with coral shore,
The old-world cry Europe hath heard of yore
From Dover cliffs: 'Ready, aye ready we!'
'Europe', saith England, 'hath forgot my boys!—
Forgot how tall, in yonder golden zone 10
'Neath Austral skies, my youngest born have grown
(Bearers of bayonets now and swords for toys)—
Forgot 'mid boltless thunder—harmless noise—
The sons with whom old England "stands alone"!' 15

T. WATTS-DUNTON.

6. *coral shore*, i. e. the Barrier Reef of Australia.

QUEEN VICTORIA

(1901)

The most remarkable feature of Queen Victoria's reign, apart from material improvements at home and the increase in Empire during sixty years, is referred to in stanza six of the poem—the personal loyalty she secured for the House of Hanover.

THE tears we disallow to lesser ill
Here is no shame for English eyes to shed,
Because the noblest heart of all is still—
Because the Queen lies dead.

Grief asks for words, yet silent grief were well; 5
Vain is desire, as passionate prayer was vain;
Not all our love can bring, by any spell,
Breath to those lips again.

Ah! had but Death foregone his royal claim,
Demanding ransom, life for life the price, 10
How loyalty had leaped to kiss the flame
Of such a sacrifice!

God knows, in many a need this thing has been—
Light hearts for her have dared the desolate grave;
From other hurt their blood has saved the Queen, 15
From death it could not save.

And of the dregs to drink from sorrow's cup
This is most bitter, that with life's release
She might not leave her children folded up
Between the wings of Peace. 20

Yet, for a solace in that darkest hour,
When even Kings have found themselves alone,
Over a people's love she kept her power,
Firm as her fathers' throne.

So by the gate where is no first nor last 25
And lords of earth must lay their splendour down,
Thither, where Love is Sovereign, she has passed
To win his queenlier crown.

Thence, by her guardian spirit heavenly-wise,
Still shall her realm of old be girded round, 30
And common loss yet closer knit the ties
That common love has bound.

Yea, too, since Nature owns no bar of race,
She, being dead, may speak through alien lands,
Changing suspicion, by remembered grace, 35
To trust that understands.

O great of heart! In whom the world has known
Wisdom with woman's sweetness reconciled;
Who held her Kingdom's honour, as her own,
Still fair and undefiled! 40

Best shall they keep that stainless memory bright
Who count their heritage a holy debt,
Who walk with fearless soul the way of light
In which her feet were set.

And in that faith, ere yet our tears are dry, 45
Or poignant grief has spent its sudden sting,
To Him she serves we lift our hearts and cry,
'God save her son, the King!'

O. SEAMAN.

19. *She might not leave, &c.* She died while the Boer War was still going on.

KING EDWARD VII

(1910)

Edward VII inherited from his mother the affection of his subjects, and as Prince of Wales he had earned it by his tact, his common sense, and his cheerful attention to duty. During his short reign all his efforts were directed towards keeping the peace abroad, where his personal qualities were appreciated almost as much as in England.

HONOUR the happy dead with sober praise,
Who living would have scorned the fulsome phrase,
Meet for the languorous Orient's jewelled ear.
This was the English King, that loved the English
ways:

A man not too remote, or too august, 5
For other mortal children of the dust
To know and to draw near.

Born with a nature that demanded joy,
He took full draughts of life, nor did the vintage
cloy;

But when she passed from vision, who so long 10
Had sat aloft—alone—

On the steep heights of an Imperial throne,
Then rose he large and strong,
Then spake his voice with new and grander tone,
Then, called to rule the State 15

Which he had only served,
He saw clear Duty plain, nor from that highway
swerved,

And, unappalled by his majestic fate,
Pretended not to greatness, yet was great.

W. WATSON (from *Sable and Purple*).

EPILOGUE

ENGLAND, queen of the waves whose green inviolate
girdle enrings thee round,
Mother fair as the morning, where is now the place
of thy foemen found?
Still the sea that salutes us free proclaims them
stricken, acclaims thee crowned.

Times may change, and the skies grow strange
with signs of treason and fraud and fear:
Foes in union of strange communion may rise
against thee from far and near: 5
Sloth and greed on thy strength may feed as
cankers waxing from year to year.

Yet, though treason and fierce unreason should
league and lie and defame and smite,
We that know thee, how far below thee the hatred
burns of the sons of night,
We that love thee, behold above thee the witness
written of life in light.

Truth is in thee, and none may win thee to lie,
forsaking the face of truth: 10
Freedom lives by the grace she gives thee, born
again from thy deathless youth:
Faith shall fail, and the world turn pale, wert thou
the prey of the serpent's tooth.

Greed and fraud, unabashed, unawed, may strive to
sting thee at heel in vain.
Craft and fear and mistrust may leer and mourn
and murmur and plead and plain:
Thou art thou; and thy sunbright brow is hers
that blasted the strength of Spain. 15

1.
Mother, mother beloved, none other could claim in
place of thee England's place:
Earth bears none that beholds the sun so pure of
record, so clothed with grace:
Dear our mother, nor son nor brother is thine, as
strong or as fair of face.

How shalt thou be abased? or how shall fear take
hold of thy heart? of thine,
England, maiden immortal, laden with charge of
life and with hopes divine?
Earth shall wither, when eyes turned hither behold²⁰
not light in her darkness shine.

England, none that is born thy son, and lives, by
grace of thy glory, free,
Lives and yearns not at heart and burns with hope
to serve as he worships thee;
None may sing thee: the sea-wind's wing beats
down our songs as it hails the sea.

A. C. SWINBURNE (from *The Armada*).